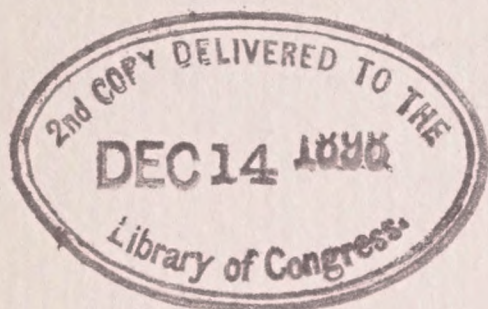


A FIGHT FOR A THRONE

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A FIGHT FOR A THRONE.

BY
JOSIAH TURNER NEWCOMB.



F. TENNYSON NEELY,
PUBLISHER,
LONDON. NEW YORK.

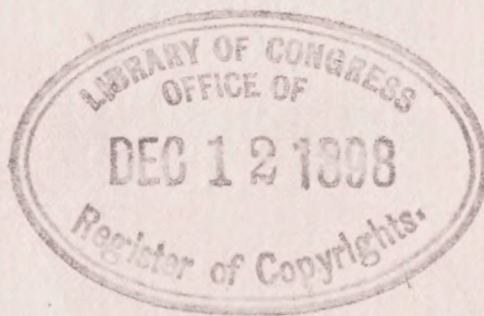
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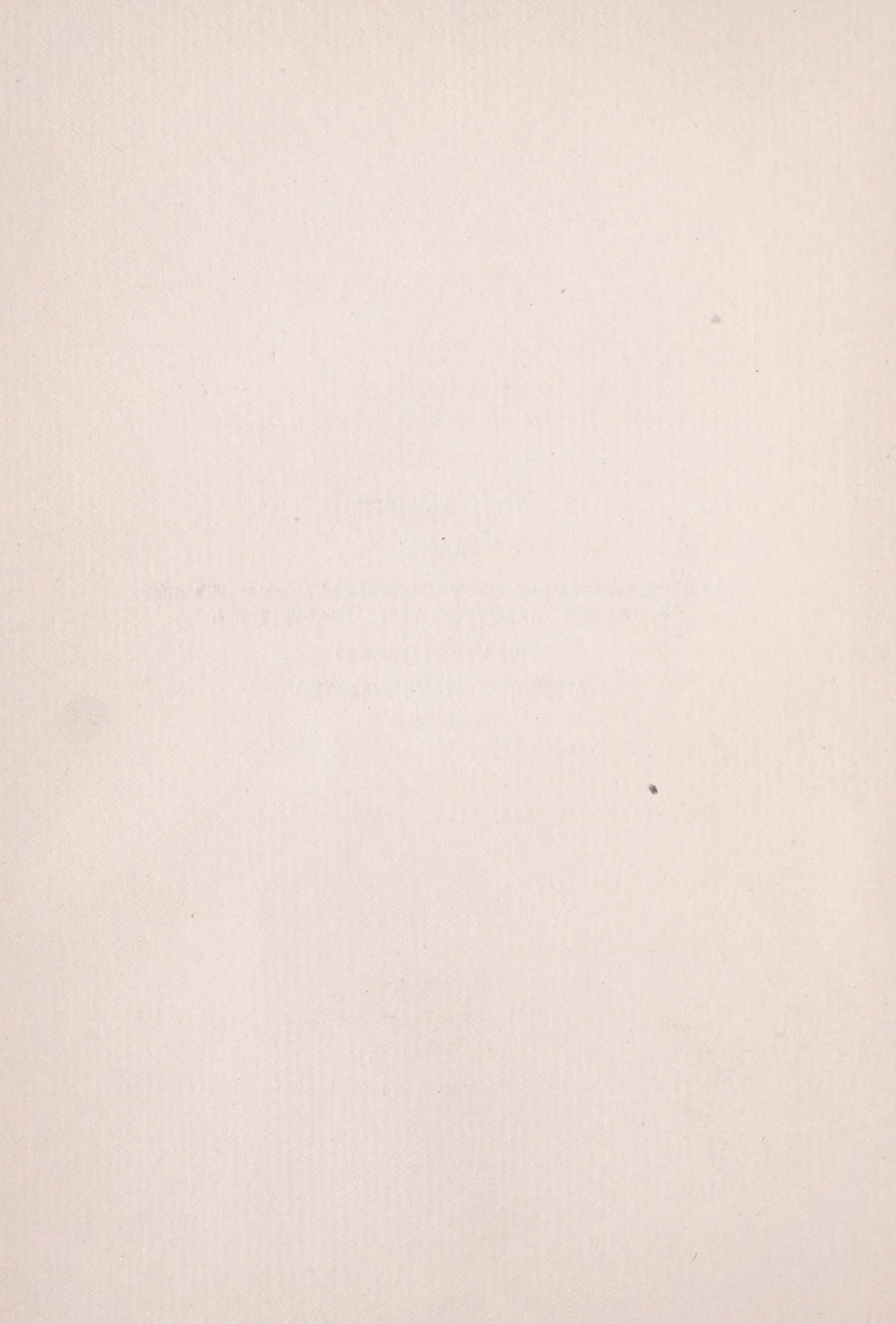
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TO MY DAUGHTER

MARY

who, sitting beside me at my study table, making "almost real" writing
with a "truly" pen, inspired many of its gentler pages,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.



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A FIGHT FOR A THRONE.

CHAPTER I.

A WRECK, A BIT OF COLOR, AND THE TIDE.

STEPHEN KENWOOD sent the prow of his boat hard upon the slanting sand of Water Island, and leaping quickly ashore, drew the light craft high and dry. The waters of Great South Bay lapped lazily along the sand, while across the dunes, beyond a stunted growth of green, the restless ocean reared its ceaseless breakers and dashed them upon the whitened beach. Kenwood made fast to a piece of heavy driftwood now buried deep in the sand; then, with his easel, chair, and umbrella tucked under his arm, he hurried across the dunes. When he reached the wide beach he turned to the eastward, and on the firmer sand, quickened his step. Occasionally he paused, and standing upon some natural eminence, peered eagerly before him along the shore. At first he seemed to meet with disappointment, but presently the sealine curved sharply, revealing a longer stretch of beach, and

in the distance, the object of his search, the wreck of a huge iron steamer lying, now a misshapen mass, almost within a biscuit toss of the shore. He wished to catch and transfer to his canvas the spirit, while it was upon him, of this huge thing of the sea, at rest after storm and disaster.

Soon he reached a suitable position, and pitching his easel, fell rapidly to his work. For an hour he toiled on, not pausing; then he left his easel, and going back toward the interior, just within the line of stunted growth which skirted the beach, examined the scene in its larger view. The abandoned vessel lay almost upon even keel, though deep in the sand, her side turned toward the shore, the stern nearer. The stretch of water between the nearer part of the wreck and the shore was visibly widening as the tide advanced. At low tide it might be crossed dry shod by means of a pathway of stones and boulders which some thoughtful visitor, with infinite pains, had placed there. The pathway or bridge led to the foot of a rough ladder which made a way up the rusty, battered side of the vessel to the broken bulwarks and the deck.

When he had finished his observations Kenwood would have returned to his easel and the sketch, but now he caught sight of a bit of color,

moving just beyond what remained of the steamer's deck house. As he caught sight of it it seemed to be approaching the shoreward end of the wreck, and in a moment it was clear that it constituted the ornamentation of a woman's hat. In another moment Kenwood saw a trim figure standing at the stern of the vessel, clinging for steadiness and support to a part of the broken railing. She seemed to have observed Kenwood, and he fancied that she intended to address him, but instead she turned, and still holding to the ironwork as she proceeded, made her way carefully across to the place where the ladder stood.

She peered with evident anxiety over the side to the water below. The water now covered the stones of the bridge to a considerable depth, and even a part of the ladder was submerged. As Kenwood watched he hesitated, hardly knowing whether or not to offer assistance to her; indeed a method of rendering it did not come readily to his mind.

Meanwhile the girl was growing clearly impatient and again Kenwood fancied that she was about to appeal to him for aid. Therefore he walked to the edge of the water where the stones began.

"You could not possibly cross," he shouted to

her. The words sounded wretchedly inadequate, but they were the first which came to him. He now could see her face quite clearly. It was the face of a girl of twenty, dark, delicate of feature, and wonderfully beautiful. Her figure was tall and shapely, and, though slender, it gave an impression of extreme physical strength. When she answered her voice carried across the water with perfect clearness, though she seemed to speak quite without effort. Kenwood noted the vocal excellence with the same sense of gratification with which the perfection of her beauty had filled him.

"I seem to be trapped here," she said, "I had forgotten the tide. Is there any way by which I can come ashore?"

"If you wait until the tide goes out—" began Kenwood.

"How long will that be?"

"Well, a long time."

"How long?" she was increasingly impatient. Kenwood made a rapid calculation.

"Nearly seven hours," he said.

The look of anxiety on the girl's face now changed rapidly to one of determination.

"I cannot wait seven hours," she said quite firmly, "I cannot wait two hours."

She looked at Kenwood with expectant eyes.

The determination was the woman's, but the achievement was for the man. The expectant eyes demanded an effort.

"It is pretty deep," Kenwood said weakly, "but if you don't mind a wetting I think I can fetch you."

She seemed to consider for a moment, but not favorably.

"Do, please, think of something else," she said.

Kenwood looked up and down the beach and across the island to the bay, but no cheering object met his anxious gaze. The whole island seemed to be deserted. The dunes lay white and bare to the east and to the west. Not a person was in sight except the impatient girl on the wreck. There was not even a building.

"If you cannot help me, I shall *swim* ashore," called the girl, "do please hurry. It is—important." She spoke the last word with grave emphasis. An idea now flashed across the consciousness of Kenwood and he welcomed it, although it involved an almost infinite labor.

"I will bring my boat," he shouted.

Relief and joy made her radiant.

"Oh!" she cried, "can you?"

"It is there on the shore of the bay," he said. "I will have to drag it across the sand. It may take some time."

“And it will be hard, too; I am truly sorry, but do, please, hurry.”

It was no slight matter, light as it was, to drag the boat over the deep sand from shore to shore, but Kenwood accomplished it. The launching of the craft in the lee of the wreck was brought about at length, despite the occasional breakers which found their way into the half-sheltered place. Kenwood rowed to the ladder, which the girl descended, and watching a favorable opportunity, he reached the shore with a few quick strokes and assisted her out upon the beach.

During this difficult and somewhat hazardous manœuvering they had exchanged hardly a word; but when they were safely ashore, and the boat had been drawn up upon the beach, the girl held out her hand quite frankly to Kenwood.

“You have done me a great service,” she said simply, “and I thank you.”

If she had been impatient, almost imperious in the beginning, she was bewitchingly gracious now, and Kenwood, because he was young and she was beautiful, quite forgot his sketch and his labor and felt himself amply rewarded.

As she spoke her thanks the girl looked at him with large, serious, dark eyes. Her manner of speech and gesture was curiously direct and vigorous.

"We will rest a minute, if you like, and then I will help you take your boat back," she said, after Kenwood had made acknowledgment of her gratitude.

He glanced at her, but she seemed to be perfectly in earnest.

"I think I can manage it without that," he said, laughing.

"Oh, but I mean it; I insist upon it."

"Nonsense!"

"But I desire it; I do indeed."

"Very well," said Kenwood. He threw out the long rope which was attached to the bow and together they began by means of it to drag the boat toward the bay. Halfway across they stopped to rest, and the girl seated herself in the stern. He made as if to go on, with her riding so, but she stopped him with a gesture. He came and leaned upon the side of the boat near her.

"This is a curious idea, your wanting to help drag the boat across," he said.

"It was so ridiculous, my getting into that trap," she answered, smiling.

"You must have been in the wreck a long time?"

"I was; I was watching—" she checked herself suddenly.

There was a pause. Presently Kenwood said:

"I can take you across, if you think your—your friends have gone back."

The girl rose, stepped out of the boat, and took hold of the rope.

"Come," she said, "let us go on."

The rest of the journey was made practically in silence. When they reached the shore the girl turned suddenly upon her companion and spoke rapidly, almost excitedly.

"You have done me a great service," she said, "and I thank you. I cannot help knowing that it seems strange to you, a mystery, that you found me there, alone, and that only a—stranger was near to help me, when I needed help. But I must ask of you a further service; that you do not seek to know why I am here, and why alone; that you let me go without—question. For, believe me, it would be but a pitiful mystery, did you discover it."

The earnestness of her manner was of such a nature that Kenwood answered her gravely. There had been almost appeal in her fine dark eyes.

"You need not fear that I shall intrude; I seek only to serve you," he said.

She gave him a quick look of gratitude, and turning without another word, sped away to the westward across the sand dunes.

Kenwood watched her retreating figure until it was lost to view beyond the straggling shrubbery, and, after she had disappeared, he still stood, looking, his mind filled with the memory of her beauty and her grace.

The girl walked rapidly to the westward, and presently reached a small, rude house or hut, which stood back from the ocean just within the line of green. She went in and passed through the hallway to an inner room.

It had a single occupant, a gray-haired man, tall of stature though slightly stooping, and swarthy of skin. He straightened himself somewhat as he heard the door open, but when he saw that it was only the girl he sank back into his chair, disappointment showing plainly upon his face, and in his dark eyes.

"I have watched and watched, father," she said, as if she were pleading with him, "and I can see nothing. I am certain that they are not coming; not now, father. Pray, let us go home."

But the man was paying little heed to her.

"They will come in good time," he said cheerfully. "They will come."

"Father, come with me; come home with me."

He did not answer her, though he took her hand and stroked it gently.

“Did you look far out, far away, over the bar?” he asked wistfully.

“Yes, yes, but I could see nothing. They will not come; oh, I am sure they will not.”

“They will come—in good time,” repeated the man. But he went to a window and looked out across the waters, still wistfully.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOUSE ON THE DUNES.

KENWOOD failed to complete his sketch during the afternoon, and, as he had often done before, he determined to camp for the night on the island, using his boat, half-overturnd, for a shelter. He prepared himself a simple meal from the store which he carried in his locker, and after he had eaten, rolled himself up in a blanket and fell asleep. He awoke with a start, and, crawling out from the shelter of his boat, sat upright, looking about him with the bewilderment which so often accompanies a sudden awakening from a deep sleep. In his mind the impression was uppermost that he had been awakened by a voice, and that the voice was that of the girl whom he had assisted from the wreck in the morning. As his senses came to him out of the confusion he tried to rid himself of this impression, for it seemed to him quite improbable; but it continued distinct and vivid. Everything in the vicinity seemed exactly as it

had been when he lay down in the gathering darkness hours before. The moon had risen now and was shining brightly, making a long pathway of silver out over the bay; beyond, the pathway seemed to end suddenly in a wide lake of light. The breeze had gone down and the ocean lay almost motionless across the dunes which glistened in the moonlight. Not a sound disturbed the stillness of the night, yet the idea that he had been awakened by the girl's voice continued in Kenwood's mind, and, try as he might to shake it off, it still asserted itself. He tried to go to sleep again under his boat, but his senses refused to yield, and for some moments he lay there, every nerve alert, listening. No sound rewarded his vigilance, but still he could not sleep, and with a motion of impatience he rolled out again and throwing off the blanket, stood up, and looked about him. There was nothing to see except the bare sand lots, the stunted shrubbery, the bay, and the ocean. With the idea of quieting his nerves by a turn on the beach Kenwood crossed over to the ocean, and began walking up and down in the moonlight, listening to the washing of the ground swell and watching the play of the light upon the moving waters. There were few stars visible; one, almost on the horizon, gleamed red and distinct,

and Kenwood fell to watching it. Suddenly he stopped short in his tracks and examined it more narrowly. He now saw that it was not a star, but the light of a passing vessel. It gave him something definite upon which to fix his attention and he welcomed it. It seemed to be growing brighter; the vessel was coming shoreward.

And now, while Kenwood was watching the approaching light thus narrowly, a single rocket was sent up from the ship. It illuminated the sky for a moment, and as it died away another rocket soared upward as if in answer. The second was not from the ship; it was from the island, from the hut which Kenwood, who had noticed it before he went to sleep, had supposed to be vacant and deserted.

The signals, for such they undoubtedly were, were understood, for they were not repeated. As Kenwood looked he saw that a single light now gleamed from a window of the hut.

The vessel continued to approach the island, and soon her dark outlines were visible in the moonlight. There was a quick movement of lights on board, followed by the launching of a small boat. Then Kenwood heard the regular swing of the oars in the locks, growing more distinct as the boat neared the shore. If he had fancied that he was witnessing the operations of

smugglers, the theory was at least weakened by the rapidity with which the boat was lowered and sent shoreward. It was evident that no cargo was being brought ashore. Soon the boat was so near that its occupants could be distinguished. Besides the men who rowed there was an officer and three other persons so muffled that it was impossible to make out their appearance even as they came almost to the shore.

As the boat approached Kenwood retreated to the shelter of the low shrubbery. The three muffled figures stepped ashore when the boat grounded and the officer, who did not disembark, held a low-voiced conversation with them.

"When we want you," said one of the men on the shore, "we will send up a rocket. Be sure that you see it, for it is bad enough to send one up."

The three men then walked briskly in the direction of the hut. Kenwood watched them until their figures were lost in the shadows of the shrubbery; then he retraced his footsteps across the island. It was no affair of his, he told himself. It would be a mistake to suppose that he was not curious, but his training and habit did not lead him to give his curiosity free rein. Moreover, he felt bound by the assurance which he had given to the girl after his

adventure in the morning. He therefore returned to his boat and threw himself down beneath it, determined to sleep.

When the three men reached the hut they were admitted at once, the door being opened by a negro, who closed it quickly, as soon as they had entered. The room to which he admitted them was small and bare of all furniture, save a table which stood in a corner opposite the door. Upon this table they threw their cloaks and then waited, not without impatience, expecting direction from the negro. One of the men was an American, perhaps a Southerner. The two others were dark-skinned, with coarse, straight, raven hair and keen black eyes.

The negro disappeared for a moment, but presently he returned and with a gesture directed the three men to a door opening to the right. They advanced immediately and the American placed his hand upon the door knob.

"You first, Father," he said, addressing the older of his two companions.

The man bowed slightly in acknowledgment and entered, the American opening the door. The other dark-skinned one followed, and the American closed the door after them, waiting for a moment outside. In the inner room, when the two men entered, a man sat motionless in a

heavy chair. His hair was almost white, but he sat tall and erect, and a slight dash of color showed beneath the swarthy tinge of his cheeks.

As they entered the room the two men dropped upon their knees, and approached thus, with bowed heads.

“Excellency!” they murmured.

He allowed them to remain so for a brief space, and then motioned to them to rise. As the ceremony concluded the door opened again and the American entered. He bowed gravely to the man who sat in the chair, but he made no other demonstration, and none other seemed to be expected of him.

The man in the chair was the first to speak. He spoke with eagerness, his eyes bright with expectation.

“Well, what news do you bring?” he demanded.

The American turned directly toward him, and seemed to deliberate, choosing the strongest words with which to reply. When he spoke he extended his arm with a respectful, but forceful gesture.

“Peter Cajelnar,” he said impressively, “these men, your friends, our friends, have come here to tell you that everything is in readiness; all is prepared, and your people are ready to receive

you. This is the news which we bear, which we bear with joy."

The gray-haired man listened with bated breath, his cheeks flushing deeper with excitement. Before he could answer, however, the door was opened softly, and the girl entered. Without noticing the visitors she went across the room and stood beside Cajelnar's chair, throwing an arm protectingly across the headrest.

A shade of annoyance crossed the face of Cajelnar, but he took the girl's free hand in his, and rose with grace and dignity.

"Gentlemen," he said quietly, though there was a slight tremor in his voice, "gentlemen, this is my daughter."

He did not notice, though the girl did, that the faces of the dark-skinned visitors grew rigid for a moment as the announcement was made. The plainer fact was that they both bowed low, murmuring words of extravagant courtesy. They then advanced toward her, the elder of the two slightly in the rear, and the American looking on with cool indifference. Cajelnar whispered to his daughter:

"Allow them to kiss your hand; it is the custom," he said.

She did as he bade her. The first, a burly fel-

low, took her hand lightly in his fingers and raised it not without grace to his lips.

The elder followed and reached out his hand also to take hers. On the middle finger of the hand which he presented there was a huge ring, curiously wrought. The girl caught sight of it as she was about to give him her hand. Instead of allowing the ceremony to be completed she drew back with a terrible cry. It sounded shrilly through the stillness of the night.

"Murderer!" she said, standing before her father as if to protect him from assault.

Cajelnar started to his feet.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded of the girl.

For answer the girl pointed to the hand of the elder man.

"See," she cried, "the ring he wears. His were the people who killed my mother. See, father, you know the ring. Oh, where is Lanier, he would know it in a moment."

The American had moved nearer to the elder man.

"You fool," he said in an undertone, "what did you wear that here for. Take it off."

He then approached Cajelnar and the girl and spoke with easy respectfulness.

"Your daughter has made a mistake," he said,

addressing Cajelnar. "The signet which Father Zanaka wears has now no significance whatever. It is an heirloom. The order is long since disbanded, in Yajoha as elsewhere. Surely you have had assurance enough that we come in good faith."

Cajelnar bowed his assent, but the girl was not mollified.

"Send them away, father," she entreated, clinging to him.

He pushed her from him gently, but with determination.

"I must talk with these gentlemen," he said firmly, meanwhile leading her toward the door. "Do you leave us for a little."

"Ah, let me stay," she begged.

"No," he answered, opening the door.

"Father!" she cried. But he pushed her gently before him and across the threshold, and drew the door to again. She knew that it was useless to try to resist him. She groped her way to the outer door and opening it stood in the doorway looking out into the night.

At this moment Kenwood, who had heard her cry, came rapidly across the sands. She recognized him in a moment, and closing the door softly behind her, she advanced to meet him.

"You are still here!" she cried.

"Yes, yes. It was you who cried out, was it not? I heard you from the shore. What is it, tell me?"

"Hush!" she said, "I can tell you nothing. I—I was foolish to cry out as I did."

"But you are in danger—in trouble——"

"My father is in danger, I can tell you no more; but if you would serve me, stay here and be ready to aid me if there is need."

"I wish only to serve you," Kenwood said simply. "I ask no more."

"Then stay," she answered.

Their vigil was long and silent; at last there was a sound from within and presently the three muffled figures appeared on the threshold. The signal for the small boat was given, and they disappeared in the direction of the shore.

They had scarcely departed when the two watchers saw a light approaching from out on the bay, and soon there was the sound of a boat running upon the shore. The girl gave a cry of relief and ran shoreward to meet them.

"Are we in time?" demanded Lanier, stooping to kiss her lightly upon the forehead.

"They have gone," answered the girl, "but he is safe."

"Thank God!" said Lanier.

"Yes, thank God," said his companion.

Kenwood, meanwhile, had watched the scene from a distance. Mathews, Lanier's companion, caught sight of him now as he stood in the moonlight.

"Good heavens, Kenwood," he said, advancing toward him with outstretched hand, "what are you doing here?"

CHAPTER III.

PAGE OR TWO OF HISTORY.

THE girl drew near as the two men shook hands. She spoke to Mathews with her usual directness of manner.

"You know him?" she said.

"Very well indeed. He is Mr. Stephen Kenwood and a royal gentleman;" he waved his hand with an extravagant gesture, but his face showed that he spoke with sincerity. The girl smiled gravely.

"He has proved himself a—royal gentleman," she said. Then she turned to Kenwood and held out her hand to him.

"I thank you for all that you have done for me," she said softly, "and for your—consideration. These are my friends, my father's friends. With them now we are quite safe." She seemed to hesitate and Kenwood saw that she wished him to go.

He pressed her hand and then allowed her to withdraw it, which she did slowly.

"I would have given my life in your service," he said solemnly, in a low tone.

She gave him a quick glance from her wonderful eyes; it thrilled through Kenwood electrically.

Three days later as Kenwood was reading a newspaper beside a window at his club he was startled by a quick touch upon his shoulder, and looking up saw Mathews standing before him.

"I have been looking for you, Kenwood," he said after they had shaken hands. "I have a commission to execute, a most important one."

The memory of the day and night on Water Island flashed vividly before Kenwood's vision.

"It is from—" he said eagerly.

Mathews smiled somewhat grimly. "Yes," he said, "it is from her. She wishes—wishes you to understand—what must have seemed to you a most curious mystery."

"It is not necessary," said Kenwood.

Mathews laughed. "So I told her," he said, "but she was determined. "Come, it is a good deal of a story; let us go where we can be quiet."

Mathews led the way. They found an unoccupied room and sat down beside a small table. While the ice melted in half-drained and neglected glasses Mathews told his story.

"Peter Cajelnar," he began, "that is as near

as his name can be translated into English, was king of the Yajoha Island in the southern Pacific. He was born on the island and to the kingdom, for his father was king before him, but his origin was European. Some shipwrecked traveller, I suppose, reached the island, and, as there was then little chance of getting away, married there. But that is mere conjecture. Peter Cajelnar himself does not know how his father became king. His own mother was a native.

"The old king, his father, was gifted with rare wisdom, and after awhile he built up a trade for the island. Presently they had a consul, and if the king had had his way there would have been a protectorate; but somebody protested, and no flag waved there but the native emblem.

"If the old king was not the original European at least he had advanced ideas handed down to him, for when Peter was but a little fellow his father sent him to the Continent to be educated. The son was nearly twenty years old when he came back. You did not see him?"

"No, no; go on."

"Well, he is worth seeing. She—Miss Cajelnar, is like him. In the later years there had grown up two pretty distinct factions on the island; those who favored the new policy of

trade and commerce, and those who rebelled against the advances toward civilization which contact with the outside world inevitably was bringing. Naturally the first faction, having the king on its side, prospered and held sway; but the other was not weak, as it turned out later.

“When the son returned he was received with a hearty welcome by the ascendant faction, for he was one of the first fruits of the spirit of progress, and in fact the division of sentiment among the people had first shown itself when the old king had proposed to send the son, the heir to the throne, abroad.

“Since the new policy had been in vogue there had been a perpetual, and I suppose an inevitable, conflict between the growing spirit of civilization and the ancient religion of the people. Not that the old king sought to overthrow it, for he was far too wise, and besides, he probably adhered to it; it was the religion of his mother. But some of the barbarous observances he had suppressed, and, with a shrewd instinct, the opposing faction made this their rallying ground, secretly charging that the leaders, if not the king himself, were infidels.

“For two years after the return of Peter, the son, all went smoothly enough, and he grew to be so popular with the people that it was hoped

that in time he might be able to unite the factions. He was urged to marry. The old king now was growing very old, and his counselors chose a young woman, a native, a daughter of one of the opposing leaders, and with the king's approval, proposed her as a wife and future queen for the son.

"But Peter was not to be driven. For a time he put them off with vague excuses, and when they became insistent he married the daughter of the consul. There was much to that story, too, but I know little of it. It is the one subject in connection with the island about which none of them will talk.

"He married the daughter of the consul, and then the trouble began for all of them. It might have blown over, for the old king stood by him, but most inopportunately the father died.

"Despite their disappointment in his marriage, the progressive element rallied around the son after his father's death, and he was elected king, by the ancient rites in council. For a space he ruled successfully if not undisturbed, until the legal time had passed and the moment came when he was to be crowned.

"This was a religious, as well as a civil, ceremony, and when the time came the Priest of Yharja flatly refused to perform his legal functions at the coronation.

“Instantly, for the priest had many followers, there was a great commotion, and the people began, openly now, to take sides for and against the new king and his alien queen.

“Still the young king was strong, and around him were strong and loyal men. There are always a hundred might-have-beens. The consul’s government might have sent him a warship, but there happened to be a war scare somewhere, and none could be spared. Perhaps the trouble might have been quieted in time, if it had not been for what took place on the night after the recalcitration of the priest was made known.

“The island had a sacred shrine, within a rude temple, built of stone. The temple and the shrine were very old, reaching backward far beyond the memory of the oldest person on the island. Here, according to tradition, the Goddess lived concealed. Yharja was her name, and the prosperity and happiness of the people were in her care. None now living had seen her, but she ministered to the people through her priest. Tradition said that she might appear to more profane eyes, in fact that she had done so in times of great rejoicing, and once or twice when she wished to warn them of impending evil. She, accordingly, was held in the deepest ven-

eration, much to the profit of the Priest of Yharja, to whom the people brought frequent tribute. The temple contained a considerable treasure, taken from a ship which had stranded upon their shore, and devoted by the people to Yharja.

“When the day broke on the morning following the announcement of the rebellion of the priest, it revealed an awful thing. The temple had been torn down, its walls were in ruins, and the shrine, the sacred shrine of Yharja, was broken and defamed. It was useless to point out to the maddened populace that a strange ship had been seen in the bay on the preceding night. The new king was accused of the crime. It was spread abroad that the alien queen had been jealous of the power and beauty of the Goddess Yharja. The rebellion of the priest, it was said, too, had urged the king to seek this terrible revenge.

“The grief and anger of the people knew no bounds. Leaders sprang up, and urged them on, and they began to rush about, to burn, to kill.

“They clamored around the palace, and when the king stood before them, they struck him down in their heathen rage, and over his body they hurried into the palace to find the hated

queen. They thought that they had killed the king, but he was only stunned. In their excitement they did not notice that he staggered to his feet and followed them.

"They found the queen, a sweet-faced, gentle lady, and with her they found the infant daughter. That was Julia Cajelnar. They killed the queen in cold blood, for she made no resistance, and they would have killed the child. One of the natives caught her up to dash her brains out on the stone door post, but, at the sight, the strength came back to Peter Cajelnar. He struck the ruffian down, and rescued the child from his murderous hands.

"And then, no longer as a king but as a father, he turned, swift-footed, and fled with the child in his arms. He reached the shore, and in an open boat, with the consul and a few of his followers who were loyal and alive, he escaped."

Mathews pushed the hair back from his forehead with a quick gesture.

"That is nearly all of the story," he said as he pressed the electric button. "The girl whom you saw and aided was Julia Cajelnar. Her father was in the house on the island. He came here after his escape and has lived in retirement, bringing up his child. Of late he has been filled with a desire to return to his people, and has

entered, most unfortunately, upon negotiations with some of the natives. These were the men who visited him on the night of your adventure. He went there alone to meet them. As soon as he had gone his daughter, whose devotion to him is the ruling passion of her life, discovered the plan and hastened to him, hoping to prevent a meeting. She fears and distrusts the men. Before she hurried after him she sent a messenger to Lanier, who was the consul when the king was deposed, and who is her grandfather, and another to me, begging us to come to her assistance. Of course we set out at once. The help that you rendered to her was timely, and she insists that you had a right to understand why it was needed. I do not say that she is wrong."

"And where are they now?" asked Kenwood eagerly.

Mathews smiled.

"I do not know that I was instructed to tell you that," he said. "Besides, I do not know. We brought them away with us, and when we reached the railway station I left them; Lanier accompanied them. I had not seen them for a year. I may never see them again. They live a secluded life. When I hear from them it is through Lanier, who is very much my friend. But come, the story is told."

"But the island, and the people; what became of them?"

"They made the old priest king, and they have gone back to their original state of savagery. That is one of poor Peter Cajelnar's troubles. He blames himself for it. It is why he allows himself to think of returning to them. He is of the blood, despite the European strain. But his devotion is wasted. They would tear him to pieces."

There was a long pause, then Kenwood said:

"It isn't a well-known story, Mathews; how do you happen to know it so minutely?"

"I met the consul more than two years ago; then I met the others, Miss Cajelnar, and the father."

Mathews rolled the corner of his glass along a line in the table carefully.

"I wanted to marry Miss Cajelnar," he said.

"Ah."

"Her views were different," he added.

CHAPTER IV.

A QUESTION OF HOMES.

WHEN Kenwood parted from Miss Cajelnar and her friends on the night of the adventure on the island they remained outside for a moment speaking rapidly, Lanier taking the lead.

"You could not prevent the interview?" he asked.

"No, I did all that I could, but it was impossible. I could not keep them from coming, or persuade my father to come away. Oh, sir," she continued, addressing her grandfather, "one of them, the one whom they called Father, wore the signet ring of which you told me."

The ex-consul listened gravely. "What was he like?" he asked. "Did they call him by name?"

"He was dark, very dark, and old, but he was tall and straight. They called him Zanaka."

The old consul was silent, searching his memory. But he shook his head. "It is so long ago," he said.

"The others were younger; one was of the native blood, the other an American."

"Montgomery," said Lanier to Mathews.

Mathews nodded. "He was certain to be one of them," he said.

Far out over the water the gray of coming dawn streaked the horizon. The night was over and day was about to break.

"Come," said Lanier, "we have no time to lose. Will he come, do you think?"

"I do not know."

They went inside. They found Cajelnar in the inner room. He showed no surprise at Lanier's presence. He greeted the two men with languid interest.

"I expected you," he said to Lanier.

"Thank God, you are still here," said the old consul.

Cajelnar smiled indulgently.

"It is almost daylight," said Lanier briskly, "you must be in need of rest. Let us go home."

Cajelnar rose quite submissively and prepared to follow him.

"I am going home—soon," he muttered.

Julia, who had been standing silently in the background, came toward him, and caught the words though they were spoken in a tone almost inaudible. The strain of the day and night of

fearful watching, the grief and fear, the love and pity, had been almost too great even for her strength. A convulsive sob shook her frame, but she caught his hand and pressed it to her heart.

"Father!" she cried.

He stroked her dark hair tenderly but made no answer, and then she led him out of the house and down to the shore of the bay, where Mathews had made their boat ready for departure. Cajel-nar took his place without a word, and his daughter sat down beside him, still holding his hand in her own. Before they had been long under way his head dropped upon her shoulder and he seemed to sleep.

At the other end of the boat Lanier and Mathews spoke of the events of the night.

"I wonder, sir," said Mathews, "that they did not take him with them. He would have gone—I believe he would have gone."

"I hardly know," answered the ex-consul thoughtfully. "He may not have trusted them fully; he is alert enough in matters relating to Yajoha. Then, too, they may not have been quite ready."

"You feel quite certain that they are not acting in good faith?"

"Absolutely. They believe that they will

never be safe while he is alive or free. If they take him back, it will be to murder him, as they murdered my daughter, or to imprison him, which amounts to the same thing. We must be more vigilant in the future. Another meeting will be fatal, I am sure of it."

Mathews glanced toward the bow of the boat where Cajelnar slept with his gray head upon his daughter's shoulder.

"They will try to take her also," he said.

The ex-consul smiled grimly. "No power could keep her from following if he went," he said.

"God help and protect her," said Mathews, solemnly and fervently.

The ex-consul was watching the day breaking in the east. He glanced at Mathews, but looked away again in a moment. He made no reply and the sail was finished in silence.

They landed on the Long Island shore and Mathews walked with them to the lonely railway station which was near by. It wanted a half-hour to train time. There were some matters to attend to at the wharf, and it seemed to be understood that Mathews would leave them here. He shook hands with Lanier and Cajelnar and then with Julia; as he left the station, however, she followed him outside.

"I shall see you again soon?" she asked.

"When you need me," he answered.

"Oh, yes, but you will come without that. I have not had time to thank you for coming in response to my message. But I do thank you."

"Yes, yes, I know."

"And you will come?"

"No."

She sighed deeply. "I am sorry," she said simply.

"I shall hear from you through Lanier, and you know that I am always ready to serve you. It is better so. Good-by."

"Wait," she said, "there is something else which I want you to do for me. Will you?"

"Of course."

It was about Kenwood; then they separated.

When they reached their apartment in a quiet part of the city, Cajelnar seemed to regain his spirits. He made no reference to the meeting with the natives of Yajoha, but entertained them, while the negro, their only servant, prepared breakfast, with an account of his journey alone to the island. He spoke cheerfully, almost playfully, and his hearers, though they listened sadly enough, tried to counterfeit his mood. But when the breakfast was over, and Cajelnar had been induced to lie down to rest, Lanier and the girl

made no pretense of concealing their anxiety and dread.

Lanier came back to the room after seeing that Cajelnar was comfortably resting. He closed the door and sat down dejectedly.

"How did they get word to him?" he asked.

"I do not know, except that there was a letter which I found after he had gone. It referred to a previous meeting with some one, of which I know nothing. It is altogether a mystery."

"We must watch him now more closely than ever. Poor girl, you are tired out."

"No, but you are, you must rest, then we can plan and act."

"Let us act first," answered the ex-consul.

"To begin with, we must leave here."

"The city?"

"No, it is easier to avoid them here. But we must go quietly to other quarters."

"Yes."

"And he must not go out alone, no matter how urgently he insists."

"Poor father!"

The old man came over and stood beside the girl, stroking her dark hair gently.

"You are like your mother," he said.

The change was made and matters began to run smoothly again. Julia was with her father

most of the time, but occasionally, when the ex-consul was with him, she took little excursions for rest and recreation. Despite her cares and fears her young strength and healthfulness asserted themselves sometimes, and she longed to be out of doors. In this her grandfather encouraged her. She was a fine wheel-woman and her recreation usually took this form. She rode out quite alone, for she was fearless as well as strong.

One day she found herself face to face with Kenwood, who was riding toward her on the wide roadway. To the left the North River lay far below. He was off his wheel in an instant and as he came toward her she dismounted also. She held out her hand to him with frank pleasure.

"I knew that I should find you," he said.

She smiled. "I *had* to come out this morning," she said, "is it not glorious?"

Her bright mood became her charmingly. He had remembered her as he had seen her during their long vigil near the hut on the island. Then she had been oppressed by fear and grief and her face, for all its exquisite beauty, had borne an infinite sadness. This morning she was radiant with youth and strength and health. It was all new to Kenwood, and he felt that it was a joy

to look upon her thus. Her dark eyes sparkled in the morning light, and her cheeks were aglow from her quick ride.

It was quite evident that she was glad to see him; she made no effort to conceal it.

"I have often wondered if I should meet you ever again," she said, smiling.

"I was sure of it," he said.

She did not choose to pursue the inquiry, however. Presently she became serious for a moment.

"I sent Mr. Mathews to you," she said in her direct way. "He told you, I suppose?"

"Yes, I felt—grateful for your confidence, though it was not necessary to tell me—it was not possible that I should have misunderstood you."

"But it must have puzzled you, my being there, and the mystery. You must have thought——"

"I thought that Providence was very good to me to make it possible for me to aid you," he said gravely.

The color in her cheeks grew a shade deeper for an instant, and there was a moment of silence.

"You reached your home safely, of course. Your father—he is safe?"

"Yes, yes, we hope so. We hope that the

danger is past. That is why I am enjoying my morning," she added, smiling.

"And I am keeping you from your ride," he said, glancing at her wheel, but he made no move to leave her.

"Does your conscience trouble you?" she asked mischievously.

"It ought," he answered, laughing.

"Then I can cure it, perhaps."

"Yes, how?"

"I am going through the park; you may come with me—if you wish."

They mounted their wheels and she struck out briskly in the lead, across the wide avenue, over a way paved with cobblestones, and then to the park entrance. She glanced back at him as she rode and called to him mockingly:

"I may ride too fast for you," she said.

Inside the park he caught up to her and rode along by her side.

"Do you ride like this usually?" he asked, laughing.

"Sometimes; not always. See, I will be more moderate. There! is that better?"

"It is more kind."

"More kind?"

"Yes; for otherwise, I must watch my wheel."

"Oh," she said. They came to a fork in the

road; to the right there was a hill, to the left a level road."

"Do you mind the hill?" she asked.

"No, and there is a fine view above."

They went up the hill at a brisk pace and at the top dismounted. They rested their wheels upon a railing and walked out into the open, across the rocky summit. Kenwood had caught the exhilaration of her mood, and as he walked by her side he forgot for a moment her strange history, which had filled him with pity and keen sympathy, but which had oppressed him, in his memory of her, with sadness, and he saw beside him only a beautiful, happy girl.

It was a joyous thing to him, the very privilege of looking at her, of hearing her voice. They were talking quite freely now, as if they had known each other for many years.

"I used to come here when I was a child," said Kenwood; "we used to try to pick out the buildings, and to find our own housetops."

"Yes?" said the girl.

"It was great fun, we thought." He began pointing out the most prominent structures.

"And there, just through the treetops," he said, "you can see one corner of my father's house, of my home."

She followed his direction vaguely.

"Do you see it?" he asked.

She looked again. "Yes, yes, I see," she said.

There was something in her tone that made him look at her quickly. She was smiling still, but some of the joy had gone from her eyes.

Suddenly she turned, and, stretching out her arm, pointed to the southwest.

"See," she said, "there is my home!"

She was smiling still, but in her smile there was real sadness now. Kenwood understood. His heart leaped with sorrow for her.

"A continent and an ocean stretch between," she said.

There was a pathos in her words and look and tone which touched the hearts of both and held them spellbound. Kenwood longed to speak to her with words of comfort, but no words came to his lips. She dropped her arm and they stood silently. Again she was the first to speak.

"Don't think that I am always complaining," she said. "For myself I do not mind so much, but think of my father. Oh, it is cruel, cruel. You think that it is strange that he longs to go back, to brave them all if necessary, and take his rightful place or die there in his own land. We try to keep him from going; I try, though I do not know whether I am right or wrong. But if I were a man, I would be like him. I would go,

if only one of all my people was loyal. Those who thrust me from my place, I would punish; I would be without mercy; or if I could not accomplish it I would die there, by their ungrateful hands."

Her eyes were blazing now. The lines of her beautiful face were drawn and her breath came quickly.

"Tell me, would not you?" she demanded, facing him.

No wild blood of a savage ancestry flowed in Kenwood's veins, but by her beauty and her vibrating voice the girl carried him with her in all her changing moods.

"It would be madness, but I would go," he said fervently.

The girl looked earnestly into his eyes for a breathless moment.

"I believe that you would," she said, "for you are a man."

Then before he could stop her, she ran swiftly across the rocks, mounted her wheel and disappeared. He followed, but she was lost to his view and he could not find her.

CHAPTER V.

A VISITOR AND A STORY.

KENWOOD rode up and down the several roadways in the vicinity of the hill, hoping to find his companion of a few minutes before, but finally he gave up the search and left the park. He had no heart to continue his ride alone, and reluctantly he turned his wheel homeward. When Kenwood told Miss Cajelnar that he had been sure that he would find her, he spoke more truly than his light tone indicated. It was true, indeed, that since his adventure on the island the memory of the beautiful girl had not been absent from his mind. The fact that she sent Mathews to him to tell him why he had found her in the midst of circumstances so peculiar and extraordinary added to the impulse of admiration and respect which already she had inspired in him. But if thoughts of her had filled his mind since their first meeting, after the meeting of to-day he found his whole being vibrating in harmony with the chords which she had struck. How

exquisitely charming she had been in her joyous mood, how thoroughly a woman; and how noble in more serious moments. And for all his disappointment at her sudden and unexpected departure, the sum total of the day's experience filled Kenwood with hope. He could not doubt that he would find her yet again. It seemed to him that already she was a part of his life, and that she must remain so.

Thoughts of this nature filled Kenwood's mind as he rode slowly homeward. Before he had time to dismount on reaching his home a servant, who had been watching for him hurried down the steps.

"Oh, Mr. Stephen," he said, "we have been searching for you everywhere, sir. Have you—have you heard—sir?"

"No! what is it?" demanded Kenwood, startled.

"Your father, sir—" began the man, but Kenwood bounded up the stairs without waiting to hear more.

In the hallway stood a man whom he recognized as the family physician. The doctor motioned toward a small reception room off from the hallway, and Kenwood followed him.

"Tell me quickly, what has happened?"

"Your father was taken suddenly ill at his office," said the physician gravely.

"He has been brought home; I can see him? Where is he?"

"He has been brought home," said the doctor, speaking so slowly that Kenwood clutched the physician's arm in his impatience, "and they sent for me at once—but—it was too late."

"Too late!"

"He is dead."

Kenwood reeled against the doorway, and pressed his hands convulsively against his temples. But in a moment he mastered himself.

"What was it?" he asked.

"It seems to have been a sudden failure of the heart. Your father was dead when I reached him. There was a physician at the office and I have given you his diagnosis."

Kenwood was hardly listening.

"My poor father," he said.

On the day after the funeral Kenwood received a visit from his father's solicitor.

"I have thought best to come to you so soon," he said, "for, as you are doubtless aware, your father's affairs were varied, and some of them require almost immediate attention. Your father was a most orderly man, sir, and you will have little difficulty in understanding the responsibilities and opportunities which have devolved upon you. He could hardly have left matters in

better condition had he known that he was to die. Yet his death must have been wholly unexpected. I do not know, sir, how fully you were informed concerning your father's business operations."

"I know almost nothing of them. I—I was to have joined him actively very soon, but I had not yet been admitted to his confidence in such matters."

"So I fancied. Well, I fear you will have to begin now in earnest; I hope you will begin."

"Yes, that is my intention."

"I have brought with me numerous papers to which I will ask you to give your attention as soon as may be."

"Certainly."

The lawyer paused, and ran over the papers rapidly. From them he took a large, long envelope containing a document of considerable thickness. The envelope was doubly sealed and was addressed to Kenwood in his father's handwriting.

"This," said the lawyer, "is doubtless the most important of all the papers. I know nothing of its contents. Your father brought it to me several years ago and left it with me to give to you in case he should die suddenly without being able to see you. Not an extraordinary pre-

caution, sir, though some would declare that he had a presentiment of the manner of his death. The envelope was never reopened by him, nor did he ever refer to it after leaving it with me. We always looked over his permanent documents once a year. This one he would take from the box and hold in his hand for a moment without speaking. Then he would put it with the pile of papers already looked over, and we would go on with our work. I have heard him sigh deeply as he put it down, but he never said anything concerning it."

Kenwood took the letter and holding it before him, gazed upon it with peculiar emotions. His father had been very dear to him. Their relations for many years had been characterized by a quiet dignity which might have been mistaken for coldness, but their devotion to each other had been deep and strong. Kenwood had looked forward with the keenest pleasure to joining his father in his business affairs, and it had been his hope that he might lighten in time the weight of care and responsibility which the elder man carried. And now it seemed to him that his father was about to speak to him once more, and for the last time. There was joy in the thought, but with it an infinite sorrow. In the days since his father's death it had seemed to Kenwood

that almost the most cruel circumstance of all had been that his father had died while his son was absent from him, without a word, without even a look of recognition and love.

The lawyer rose to take his departure.

"I will come to you again—say to-morrow morning," he said. "Meanwhile, should you have urgent need of me, which is unlikely, you can reach me at my office or even at my residence after business hours. I am absolutely at your service, as you see. Good-day, sir."

Kenwood walked with him to the door of the library, and returning took up his father's letter. But still he hesitated to open it. He turned it over, regarding it curiously, weighted it and marked its thickness; then put it carefully down again upon the table. He was conscious that his brain was in a whirl; he felt that he must calm himself, gain strength and clearness of mind, before he could read his father's message, whatever it might be.

He walked to the window, and, drawing aside the heavy curtain, looked out upon the street. In the peculiar condition of his mind he began curiously to note the workmanship of the cornices of the houses across the way, and to count the windows. Vagrant impressions followed one another through his brain with confusing

rapidity. But gradually he grew calmer, though he still stood at the window looking out upon the quiet pavement. And now upon his mental vision there came a pair of glorious dark eyes, and a face of rare and radiant beauty—Julia Cajelnar's face—and curiously a sentence which she had spoken, perhaps because its sadness fitted his mood, kept repeating itself in his thought: "A continent and an ocean stretch between."

Now he fell into reverie, and leaving the window flung himself into a huge easy-chair where he remained motionless, with his head resting back upon the cushions, and his eyes half-closed.

Presently he was aroused by a light knock at the door and, in answer to his startled "Come in," a servant entered bearing a plate with a card upon it.

"A gentleman to see you, sir," he said. "He said he would not disturb you if it were not very important, sir."

Kenwood took the card.

"Montgomery, Montgomery," he said, "I do not know any Montgomery."

"No, sir, he said you would not know the name. But he said it was very important."

"What is he like?"

"A tall, large man, sir, and I should think a Southerner."

Kenwood hesitated and then turned back to his easy-chair.

"Very well, show him up," he said.

"I have taken the liberty of calling upon you here," said the visitor after the two men had bowed stiffly to each other, "because my business is of a nature which will admit of no delay. I trust you will pardon me if I make no further excuses."

Kenwood bowed, remaining standing and waiting for Montgomery to go on. The man's manner, without being exactly offensive, displeased Kenwood undefinedly.

"The fact is," Montgomery continued, "that I was about to have an interview with your father on the day he died. I had communicated with him already, and he had appointed an hour, as you will see by this note which I had received from him."

He handed Kenwood a sheet of paper, and the young man glanced at it, examined the signature with some care, and handed it back. It was written on his father's memorandum paper and was undoubtedly genuine. It was purely formal; it said:

"I can see you at 3 o'clock at my office.

"KENWOOD."

“At 3 o’clock your father was dead. As the heir, sir, of your father’s obligations as well as his fortunes, I must acquaint you with the nature of my business with him.”

Kenwood felt a growing impatience and dislike toward his visitor, and he spoke now with brusqueness.

“Whatever my father’s obligations are,” he said, “they will be fulfilled by his heir to the utmost. But I have yet had no time to examine his business or even his personal affairs, and I must ask you to wait until I am prepared better to understand and administer these matters. In the meantime, I must refer you to my father’s solicitor, who also acts for me.”

Kenwood moved to open the door in token that the interview was closed, but his visitor stopped him with a gesture.

“My business can neither be delayed nor referred to a solicitor,” he said boldly. “I do not wish to be insistent, but I have no choice.”

“I do not understand you.”

“Ah, but you will understand. Sir, my business refers to the honor of your father, as well as to the interest of those whom I represent.”

“My father’s honor!”

“Exactly. You will guard it best by listening to what I have to tell you.”

"Explain yourself."

"I cannot, in a moment; I have reason to believe that you know nothing of the story, and it is a long one. I do not doubt that you will demand proofs, and they will be forthcoming. I have come to tell you the story. I warn you not to refuse to listen."

"That is a threat!"

"No, it is a statement of fact."

The hot blood surged to Kenwood's head and he approached his visitor, a dangerous light shining in his eyes. The man stood his ground coolly.

"It is a threat," said Kenwood, "the threat of a blackmailer."

The man shrugged his shoulders.

"Those are hard words, Mr. Kenwood," he said. "I ask you to hear nothing which I cannot prove."

Kenwood felt his fingers tingling with an almost mastering impulse to take the man by the throat, but he restrained himself with an effort, and there was a moment's silence during which he grew calmer. Suddenly Kenwood turned and summoned a servant.

"You wait over there," he said to Montgomery, indicating a corner of the room, "sit down, for you may be here some time."

"James," he said as the servant appeared, "go over to the station and ask Captain Dickartt to send an officer here at once. When he comes let him wait downstairs until I summon him."

Montgomery stood looking on quite coolly. Kenwood closed the door as the servant departed, locked it, and put the key in his pocket.

"Now, sir," he said, turning toward his visitor, "I think that you are a blackmailer and a rascal, but I am going to hear your story. When it is finished I confidently expect to turn you over to the policeman for whom I have sent."

Montgomery seated himself without apparent nervousness.

"You have granted all that I ask," he said, "I do not mind your fireworks, though they spare me the necessity of telling my story delicately."

"Go on," said Kenwood impatiently.

Montgomery settled himself easily in his chair and began his narrative.

CHAPTER VI.

STEPHEN KENWOOD'S INHERITANCE.

"Not quite twenty years ago," began Montgomery, "your father was a struggling lawyer in San Francisco, poor and generally accounted unsuccessful. I am going to tell you why he abandoned his profession and how he secured the chance to begin the business career which he pursued so brilliantly. When your father died so suddenly the newspapers printed extra editions telling the news; if he had died before the incident which I am about to relate, hardly a newspaper, even locally, would have chronicled the event."

Montgomery was speaking slowly as if engaged in friendly reminiscence. Kenwood stopped him roughly:

"Come, come, sir," he cried, "you are presuming upon my patience. Get to the point of your story."

"Very well," said Montgomery easily, "I will. Finding that he was a failure professionally, your

father turned to knavery to retrieve his fortunes. Have you ever heard of the Island of Yajoha in the Pacific?"

Kenwood started.

"It is the dwelling place of an ancient race, and the head of an important group of islands, though it is true that they are little known. Less than twenty years ago your father, Stephen Kenwood, senior, headed an expedition of piracy, looted an ancient temple on the island, and brought away a treasure which had been deposited there generations before and left unharmed, through the devotion of a deeply religious people. As a result of this vile robbery your father was able to embark on the road to wealth and fortune, but as a result of it also, an enraged people murdered a helpless woman, who was their queen, and drove their king into desolate exile."

Montgomery was either an excellent actor or his feelings were deeply aroused by the wrongs of the land of which he spoke, for as he concluded he rose from his chair and began to pace excitedly across the end of the room, tossing back the hair from his forehead and his eyes flashing.

Kenwood watched him for a time in silence. For a moment he had been stunned by the re-

cital, but now he was thinking clearly and rapidly. He was fitting the details of this man's narrative with those of the story which Mathews had told him. Astounding as the discovery was, he saw that they coincided with exactness. For the first time it came to him that part of the man's story might be true.

"You spoke of proofs," he said at length, "what proofs can you bring?"

Montgomery gave a short laugh. He re-seated himself in his chair.

"I can and will bring you the best of proof," he said. "Two of the men who were with your father in this expedition are here in this city with me. I shall bring them to you. I desire you to make the fullest investigation."

"You may depend that I will," said Kenwood, between his teeth.

"Exactly; and when it is made, you will say that I have done you a service. And then—" Montgomery hesitated.

"And then—" said Kenwood.

Montgomery shrugged his shoulders and looked at Kenwood curiously. After all, the man had been but a skillful actor.

"Perhaps you will pay me," he said boldly.

"Ah," said Kenwood. He walked to the window and looked out for a time, lines of care

deepening on his forehead. Presently he turned, walked to the door, unlocked it and flung it open.

"You can go," he said to Montgomery.

"And the men, your father's companions?"

"Bring them here to-morrow, at 10. Now go."

Montgomery walked to the door, but turned as he crossed the threshold.

"The policeman down there," he said with an ironical smile, "shall I tell him that you do not need his services to-day?"

Kenwood vouchsafed no answer and Montgomery left him.

"I will return to-morrow at 10," he called back as he descended the stairs.

Kenwood sat silently for a long time still revolving, over and over again, the astounding revelations which his visitor had made. As to the truth of the assertion that his history was thus involved with that of Julia Cajelnar—for thus the problem presented itself to his mind, he made no effort toward decision. His mind was working rapidly now to bring the facts as he knew them into their proper relation with each other. It was an effort of classification rather than of determination.

It was clear to him that the whole story which

Montgomery had told him might be a skillful manipulation of truth, of truth fasely applied. It might be pure blackmail, this charge that his father had assisted, had led the expedition, although the story of the expedition might be, and doubtless was, substantially true. It was not the sort of a story that could be kept secret; doubtless many persons were acquainted with its main features, and not a few with its details.

At length the young man rose and began pacing backward and forward across the room. As he passed the table his glance suddenly fell upon the letter which his father had written and left with his lawyer for delivery.

He took it up and broke the seals without hesitation. His mind grasped eagerly now at this definite thing. Without waiting to sit down he ran hastily over the first few pages; then he threw himself into a chair and, beginning again at the first of the letter, read on, slowly and carefully. This is what he read:

“MY DEAR SON: You may have wondered, as you grew to manhood, that I did not make you, my only heir, more fully a confidant in business matters; that I have not actively prepared you for the grave responsibilities which one day must be shifted from my shoulders to yours. I have hoped, and still hope, as I pen these lines,

that the responsibilities which I must leave to you may be of a pecuniary nature only, involving merely the management and continuance of large and prospering interests, with the solution of the grave and serious problems thus involved. That these may be all which I need explain to you I sincerely trust, for your own sake and, yes, for my own, and that it may be so I have delayed, and still delay. Yet I dare not run the risk of silence altogether, and this letter, which I shall intrust to Mr. Burden, is to be given to you should I meet with some sudden accident or—die suddenly. It is to explain to you a task which I expect, myself, to perform, which, if I perform it, shall never be made known to you, and which will devolve upon you only in the event of my death before it is accomplished. Yet should I die, leaving it unperformed, I charge you to perform it, at whatever cost.

“I presume you know that the fortune which has been mine for many years, and which, under the seeming favor of Providence, is increasing yearly, did not fall to me by inheritance. Yet the beginning of it did not come to me, as you may perhaps have thought, through the slow process of business development. If I accomplish my task, you shall never know how the start came to me. But until it is accomplished, I dare not leave it unrecorded. Thank God, your mother never had to know while she lived; if, on the other side, she knows, she is in a land where they know forgiveness also. But come, I must write it down.

“When you were a boy of four I was a penni-

less lawyer in San Francisco. One day, by chance, I was called upon to defend a rough sailor in a petty case. The prosecution bungled, and with little effort I secured his acquittal. He was full of gratitude—he had no other means of paying me a fee—and afterward he used to drop into my office occasionally, and, because he was the only person, except your mother and you who seemed to care to come near me, I did not repel him.

“It is a miserable story that I am going to tell you, Stephen, but try to remember, when you judge me, that I was penniless and a failure; that I had a wife and little child who almost any day might want for bread. I could not see right and wrong as I see them now. All this you cannot realize, perhaps, but I charge you to read with charity if ever you read these words. You see I hesitate as I reach the point of confession. Yes, it is confession, but I must not allow myself to shrink.

“One day this fellow told me a story which I listened to idly, believing it to be a sailor’s yarn. He told of an island in the South Pacific where untold wealth had been for years, for generations, deposited beneath the shrine of a heathen temple. Day after day, from that time forth, he persisted in his story, and finally, point blank, proposed that I join him in an expedition to take this store and turn it to our own uses. With the constant repetition, the story had gradually taken hold upon my imagination. I shall not tell you how I resisted the temptation at first, for finally I yielded. We talked it over until I

lost my moral perspective. I began to believe, as he so stoutly urged, that sooner or later, some one must seize the treasure. It had no protection, save the little that a savage people could provide. Practically, it was at the mercy of whoever knew of it and chose to reach out and take it. Trade was beginning to spring up with that and the neighboring islands and the isolation which had protected the treasure soon would protect it no longer.

"We fitted out an expedition, secretly and successfully, and after a long voyage reached the island. We entered the bay just after nightfall. Some disturbance had excited the people and no notice was taken of our arrival. We told our crew that white men had been massacred there and that we were come to take vengeance. We dealt out liquor to them in generous proportions, and, if any of them cared, they believed. We found the temple—a rude building, and secured the treasure. The place was defended only by a few priests, most of whom were killed in the fight which ensued. The temple was practically demolished and the shrine was destroyed, for under it the treasure lay.

"The treasure was much smaller than we had expected. From the expedition, however, I realized enough to give me my beginning, and all that I have now is in a certain sense the result of this terrible crime; for crime it was, and so for many years I have regarded it.

"But I have not yet told the worst, or indicated the task which is to be performed. What I am now about to tell you I did not learn until

more than a year after the looting of the temple. It appears that the chief of the island, or king, as they called him, was a half-breed, and that his wife was a white woman. The robbery, or at least the destruction of the temple, was placed at their door. The people went mad, and murdered the wife and drove the chief with a little child, his daughter, from their shores. It is this which rests so heavily on my conscience, and for years it has been my fondest hope that some day I may be able to make suitable restitution. Whatever befalls, I know that I can never rest until it is accomplished. It haunts me day and night. That yet I have done nothing toward this end I confess with shame, but the way has never seemed clear, nor does it now seem clear.

“His name is Peter Cajelnar.”

Thus abruptly the letter closed, with the signature of Kenwood's father. Kenwood looked again in the envelope and discovered that there was an enclosure. It was brief. It said:

“Since writing this, I have learned that Cajelnar and his daughter are in this city. This should make my task easier, but I still have no plan.

“S. K.”

When Kenwood finished the reading he put the papers carefully back into the envelope, and, holding it still in his hands, sat motionless. The sunlight came in through the window slantingly,

and he watched it idly while it crept slowly across the carpet, as the sun sank lower. When the servant came to light the lamps he was still sitting there, so still that the man would have gone out on tiptoe thinking him asleep, but he called to him:

"I want the lights, James," he said, "for I have work to do."

The man watched Kenwood furtively while arranging the lamps.

"You are not ill, sir?" he said timidly.

"No, no, what made you think of it?"

"You look worn, sir, begging your pardon. You need rest, sir."

"My father never rested, James."

"No, sir. He used to say he couldn't rest, sir; that he rested while he worked."

"Perhaps I can rest—while I work," said Kenwood.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MATTER OF REPARATION.

KENWOOD's life up to this time had been one of ease, though not of idleness. He had worked, as one must who has the fitness for work within him, but he had been his own master. He had a taste for study and made much of large opportunities; his accomplishments as an artist were modest, but he did not overrate them. He understood when he sat before his easel that he was not engaged in serious work. Of what serious work would be he had clear and thoughtful views, and if he did not look forward to the beginning of it with extravagant enthusiasm, as many young men do, his strong manhood told him that when the time came he would take his place among men, forcefully and diligently, as befitted his kind.

Thus neither the sudden death of his father, nor the fearful revelation which followed it, nor the unaccomplished task which with terrible certainty fastened itself upon him for perform-

ance, found him weak or unprepared. At first he had been stunned, then confused, and for a space without the power of determination and action. But soon he began to think quite clearly; his moral perceptions, as well as his reason, fully awake.

He wasted no time in condemnation of his father, whom he loved and respected, or yet in apology for him. The curious fact that the duty which his father so clearly perceived had been so long neglected, although he found no explanation for it either in the letter or in his knowledge of his father's character, impressed him only as another reason why his own action must be prompt and complete. For that it must be so he never questioned.

Nor did the method of the reparation which must be done present to his mind a difficult or uncertain problem. His father's letter indicated that he had contemplated some simple act of compensation to Cajelnar as a means of restitution. How incomplete, how futile this would be was evident to the clearer vision of the son. Restitution he saw to be impossible, for the awful death of the young queen, the subsequent excesses and degeneracy of the people of Yajoha, the years of grief and exile which Cajelnar had endured, were irrevocable; so far beyond the

reach of human activity that they baffled the mind which sought compensation for them.

A double duty lay before him: to Cajelnar and to the people of Yajoha. Cajelnar's longing to return to the island must be fulfilled; he must be placed again upon his throne; something, Kenwood knew not what or how, must be done to raise the people from the state into which they had fallen. Thus Kenwood decided. He did not count the cost. His father's impressive injunction, his own sense of right and duty urged him relentlessly forward. To act, to act quickly, was his only thought.

It was quite late when Kenwood reached his final determination, but, putting aside with impatience the thought of delaying until morning, he summoned a cab and drove to the residence of Mr. Burden, his father's solicitor. A light still burned in the lawyer's study and Kenwood was admitted at once. Mr. Burden greeted him cordially.

"I hardly expected you to-night," he said, "but I thought it possible that after looking over the papers, you would wish to confer with me immediately. Have you brought them with you?"

"No; indeed I have read only the communication which my father left with you. It was most

important. It places a heavy responsibility upon me."

"Ah," the lawyer bowed, waiting for the younger man to go on.

"What that responsibility is it seems best not to explain, even to you, sir."

Mr. Burden made a depreciating gesture.

"It is not necessary," he said.

"But I wish to be left perfectly free," continued Kenwood, "for I am about to embark on an arduous undertaking. I have come to ask you—to put it plainly—how large a sum of money I can command immediately, and what my subsequent resources will be, provided I take no part in the management of the interests which are now mine, in fact leaving them to be carried on under your direction solely."

The lawyer took a slip of paper and with a pencil wrote seven figures upon it, passing it over to Kenwood.

"So much is immediately available," he said, "or can be made so."

"How soon?"

"In a day or two."

"It must be as soon as that. There must be no delay. And the other matters; they can be arranged?"

"You are going away—abroad?"

"I cannot tell; I do not know. I shall be—occupied for some time."

"They can be arranged," said Mr. Burden, after a minute's thought.

"Very well," said Kenwood, rising, "as soon as the papers can be prepared let it be done." He seemed in a hurry to get away.

The lawyer walked with him to the door.

"I had hoped," he said, "that you would take up your father's interests and carry them on, sir." He spoke with some feeling, as he opened the door.

"I had hoped for that also," said Kenwood, and added, for youth is sanguine: "I may do so yet, Mr. Burden."

"Yes, yes, of course," said the lawyer. He closed the door as the young man drove away and going back to his study turned out the light there carefully.

"A most extraordinary young man," he said to his wife when he joined her a moment later, "a most extraordinary young man."

When he left the lawyer's residence Kenwood drove at once to his club, for there he hoped to find Mathews. His acquaintance with Mathews had been familiar, though they had never been intimate friends, and he turned to him instinctively as one who might aid him in finding Peter

Cajelnar. Although Mathews had said that he did not know where Cajelnar and his daughter were, he had admitted that he heard frequently from Lanier, and Kenwood felt confident of securing his aid.

He found Mathews, as he had expected, the center of a lively group of the younger members. It was Kenwood's first appearance at the club since the death of his father, and those of his circle who were acquainted with him rose and greeted him gravely. He shook hands with several of them and then turning to Mathews he said:

"I came in to find you, Mathews, can you spare me a minute?"

"Yes, of course."

The two men walked to a quiet corner.

"Mathews," said Kenwood, "I think you can do me a service if you will; I have come to ask you to do it."

"Anything in my power, certainly."

"I want you to tell me where Peter Cajelnar is."

"My dear boy," said Mathews, smiling, "I do not know myself."

"But you could find out?"

"I could find out, certainly."

"Will you?"

Mathews hesitated, looking away. He took a turn across the room, leaving Kenwood standing watching him. Presently he stopped.

"You think me an ass for hesitating, Kenwood," he said, "and I do not blame you. But you have asked me to do something that—that I would not do for myself."

"Of course if——"

"Wait. But I am not altogether an ass. At least, I have my better moments. I will tell you what I will do. I will send you to Lanier."

"That is all I ask."

"I would have to go to him myself, you know. Here, I will write you a line to him."

"Thank you."

Kenwood took the brief note which Mathews handed to him and the two men stood for a moment each feeling that something more ought to be said, but neither finding the words to speak.

"Good-night, and thank you again," said Kenwood finally, extending his hand.

"Good-night," said Mathews.

Kenwood turned and walked toward the door. Before he reached it, however, he looked back. Mathews was still standing where he left him. An undefined something in the expression on his friend's face prompted Kenwood to go back to him.

"I think I ought to tell you, Mathews," he said, "that my mission with Peter Cajelnar has nothing to do with—has no reference to—his daughter."

He spoke with an effort. The situation was not an easy one for either of them.

Mathews bowed gravely, but in a moment his face cleared and he laughed lightly.

"What a cad you must have thought me," he said.

Kenwood smiled. A sudden determination seized him.

"I should like to prove to you that I do not think you anything of the sort, that I think very differently of you, Mathews," he said.

"Come now," said Mathews lightly, "I did not expect you to admit it."

"If you will allow me to do so," said Kenwood, "I would like to tell you why I am seeking Peter Cajelnar."

"Why do you wish to tell me?"

"Well, because I trust you; because you are acquainted with his history; because—you may be able to help me—or help him."

"I am glad for your confidence, Kenwood; do not misunderstand me; but what is there that I can do?"

"Nothing, perhaps; perhaps much. Will you

sit down and listen? I have much to tell you; much that is so strange that it almost passes belief."

"Certainly, I will listen if you desire it."

The two men sat down and Kenwood related the whole story of his father's relation to the history of Yajoha. When he had finished Mathews said, after a pause:

"Well, what do you intend to do?"

"What would you do?" asked Kenwood.

"That is hardly a fair question," said Mathews. "I am not in your place; I cannot see all that you see."

"But what would you do?" persisted Kenwood.

Mathews hesitated still, finally he said:

"There are many reasons why he should not go back, even if he could do so in safety."

"Also many why he should go."

"I do not know. His daughter——"

"Would go back, even to die, if she were in his place!"

"Yes, I know what she says, and she means it. But what if the people imprison him, kill him perhaps?"

"Oh, he must be protected; he can be protected."

"You are determined that he shall go back, Kenwood?"

"I am determined that he shall have the chance; that if he wishes to return he shall do so."

Mathews was thoughtful for a space. Finally he said:

"I hope you are not making a mistake, Kenwood."

"I am sure that I am not."

"How do you propose to act?"

"I do not know."

"You will need help."

"Yes; can I count upon yours?"

"Wait; we must consult Lanier."

"You are right. I suppose he will oppose the project."

"I think so, but I am not sure. He will know the dangers and the chances, at any rate."

"Tell me about Cajelnar," said Kenwood, "is he in a condition to act with us, or must we act for him merely?"

"I hardly know. He is not an old man, though he looks old. In matters relating to Yajoha he is keen and strong, but his health has been failing of late. You must see him, of course."

"At any rate," said Kenwood, "he must decide whether he will go or not. I do not question what his decision will be."

"You think he will go?"

"I know it."

"And his daughter?"

"I suppose she will wish to go also, will she not?"

"I suppose so," answered Mathews, "but it would be a crime to take her there."

Kenwood made no answer for a moment. When he broke the silence he spoke very quietly.

"My duty is to her father," he said.

"She will say that hers is also; she will go," said Mathews dejectedly.

"She is right," said Kenwood.

It was now too late to attempt to find Lanier. Therefore, after making an appointment for the morning, the two men separated and Kenwood made his way homeward. It was long past midnight and the streets were deserted. When he reached home he realized, for the first time during that eventful day, that his strength was well-nigh exhausted. The hours of mental and physical activity had calmed his brain, and when he threw himself down upon his couch he slept.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

To Julia Cajelnar, and possibly to Lanier, the interval since the visit of Montgomery, Zanaka, and their companion to Peter Cajelnar at the house on the dunes had seemed to be one of increasing security. But in reality it had been nothing of the sort. The change of quarters, and Lanier's efforts to keep Cajelnar in seclusion, had delayed, not checkmated, a plan which had been arranged at the first meeting.

Cajelnar sought and finally established communication with Montgomery, and, when the ex-king made his whereabouts known, Montgomery, active and resourceful as was his nature, hastened to him, for that purpose abandoning another less important plan with which he had been engaged since losing track, for a brief space, of the former ruler of Yajoha.

When he returned to his lodgings after his interview with Kenwood at the latter's residence, Montgomery found these tidings from Cajelnar

awaiting him. He hastened to make use of them. He found Cajelnar eager to carry out the arrangement for his return to Yajoha, but hesitating and doubtful as to a means of evading the vigilance of Julia, Lanier, and those whom the daughter and the ex-consul might summon to their aid to stop the mad enterprise which he contemplated. Montgomery was not a man to be restrained by considerations of this nature.

At first, for want of a better resource, he began to urge Cajelnar to disregard those who might seek to restrain him, to move boldly despite their resistance, to set out openly; the ex-consul, he urged, and the others, would soon find themselves powerless to interfere, and later, when they discovered that they had been wrong, and that Cajelnar's friends, Zanaka, Montgomery, and the rest, had acted wisely and in good faith, they would be the first to seek to excuse their former conduct.

Thus Montgomery talked at first, in his smooth, easy style, graceful of manner and speech, convincing in the method if not the matter of his argument, confident, yet respectful, even deferential. He had a rare faculty of being insistent, almost imperative, without seeming to overstep courtesy.

While he was speaking thus Julia came into

the room. She recognized Montgomery at once, and he could see that her face grew suddenly pale, but she spoke to him quietly in order not to attract her father's attention and calmly accomplished the errand (she was looking for a book) which brought her into the room. Montgomery stopped talking and watched her intently as she scanned the shelves. He noted the graceful poise of her body, the lithe symmetry of her figure, the fresh young beauty of her face, and gradually a peculiar smile grew upon his lips. He did not speak until she found her book and left the room.

"After all," he said carelessly as she vanished through the *portière*, "after all, there is no reason why you should not take your daughter with you."

But, somewhat to Montgomery's surprise, Cajelnar seemed set against this suggestion. The ex-king's devotion to his daughter during her childhood had been a controlling impulse. If of late it had subordinated itself to his passion to return to Yajoha and his people, still it had by no means passed away, and he could not be led to make her a partner in an exploit which, despite the assurances which he had received from Montgomery and Zanaka, despite the bias which his passion to return made certain, he

clearly considered hazardous and doubtful. To risk his own life and fortunes—useless and broken as he felt them now to be—he deemed an inconsiderable thing. But it was his plan that Julia should remain. He felt no pang in leaving her, for Lanier was here to protect and guide her. That she might be with him again, under fairer fortunes and brighter skies, he allowed himself fondly to hope, for his love for her was boundless, save in respect to that which he considered his duty as a king.

When Julia found that Montgomery again had discovered her father's whereabouts, and was in open communication with him, her heart sank within her; all the fear and dread which she had felt before the days of fancied security in their new lodgings returning with twofold strength. Whatever her sympathies with her father's desire to return to his people, and in her revelation of her feelings to Kenwood she had not exaggerated the extent to which she did sympathize with them, she was filled, nevertheless, with a nameless distrust of this man, no less strong if less definite than of Zanaka, with whom he was associated. She went about her search for the book, suppressing as far as she could any sign of her agitation, because she desired not to put her father on his guard. But

when she left the room it was with the intention of summoning Lanier to her assistance without delay.

She wrote a hasty note to the ex-consul, informing him of Montgomery's presence. Then the problem of its delivery came to her. She dared not go out herself, leaving the two men there. After a moment, however, she bethought herself of the negro servant. Already he had been sent out on an errand, but she expected his return momentarily, and, despite the seriousness of the delay, she was forced to wait. There seemed no other resource. When he came, and the time was indeed not long, although in her impatience it had seemed considerable, she was about to dispatch him hastily with the note to Lanier, when she heard the door which opened into the hallway from the room where Montgomery and her father were, open and then close again. But her fear was changed to joy when she heard her father's measured step approaching. Montgomery had gone, and her father had remained. For the moment she felt that they were safe. She therefore hesitated to send for Lanier and after a moment's consideration decided not to do so. It was Lanier's custom to drop in upon them in the evening, and she was anxious not to arouse her father's suspicions.

She destroyed the note to Lanier, and spent what remained of the afternoon and the early evening with her father, who seemed quite strong and cheerful. Her hope that Lanier would come was not realized, but still she hesitated to send for him, being confident that he would come the next day and that in the meantime she could guard her father safely.

As Mathews had said to Kenwood in telling him the story of the overthrow of Peter Cajelnar and the murder of his young queen, there are always a hundred might-have-beens. It is in moments of fancied security that disaster comes. Such fancies seem inexcusable, often, in the retrospect, but let not the strongest, the most vigilant, boast that they come not to him. For they may come, and the strongest and the most vigilant may be undone.

Cajelnar retired to his room just before 10 o'clock. A few minutes later Julia went to hers, which opened upon the same hallway. At 11 o'clock Montgomery returned and let himself in at the outer door with a key which Cajelnar had given to him. He came softly upstairs through the dark hallway and waited just outside the door. Through the transom he could see that a light burned dimly within. Presently he heard a careful footstep, and a moment later Cajelnar spoke in a low tone.

"Montgomery?"

"Yes. Open the door."

Cajelnar did so softly, and Montgomery entered. He bore a bundle under his arm. This he handed to Cajelnar.

"Hurry," he whispered.

In a moment Cajelnar had muffled himself so that his appearance was wholly concealed. Montgomery also wore a heavy cloak the collar of which he turned upward so that it concealed completely the lower part of his face. He now opened the door and with a gesture bade Cajelnar precede him into the darkened hallway. The ex-king hesitated a moment, gave a quick glance through the doorway leading toward his daughter's room, sighed deeply, for he was thinking of her as he gave himself to Yajoha, and advanced as Montgomery indicated. Slowly and carefully Cajelnar descended the stairs, followed by Montgomery. They let themselves out, noiselessly, and walked to the corner where a cab, which Montgomery had stationed there, awaited them. The streets were quite deserted. They entered the cab and drove rapidly away.

When Julia Cajelnar awoke the gray of the dawn was just beginning to show between the shutters of the half-closed blinds at her window. She lay still for a minute watching the increas-

ing light and remembering the occurrences of the preceding day. Suddenly she sat up in bed, a quick, nameless fear in her heart. It was nothing new. Many, many times she had wakened thus, and, creeping softly to her father's apartment, had found him sleeping quietly there. Even now she half-smiled at her fear, but she slipped out of bed, and, drawing a loose wrapper about her, crossed the hallway to her father's room.

With a sharp cry she started back against the casement. The room was empty; the bed had not been used. Her father was gone. The girl stood helpless for a moment; then the impulse and the power to act came back to her in a rushing flood. She ran back to her room and dressed herself quickly. Soon she sped down the stairs and out into the street. At a district messenger's office she stopped to send a hasty note to Lanier. Then she hurried onward.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HEART OF A PRINCESS.

EARLY on the morning following their interview at the club Kenwood was joined by Mathews, and together they set out for Lanier's lodgings. They found the ex-consul at breakfast. He listened to Kenwood's narrative without comment, and when the young man had completed his story regarded him meditatively from beneath his long white eyebrows.

"So it was your father who robbed the temple," he said abruptly after a long silence.

Kenwood winced. "My father is dead," he said in a low tone.

"And '*nil nisi bonum*,' " quoted the ex-consul. "Well, I am willing. It is, I understand, your desire to make reparation—restitution?"

"It was my father's wish; I shall carry out the work; but it was his injunction, his desire."

"And you think of aiding Peter Cajelnar to return to his people?"

"That is a part of my plan, sir," said Ken-

wood. He was growing impatient under the ex-consul's cool cross-questioning.

Lanier crossed over to the mantel and took therefrom a long, heavy pipe, which he proceeded to fill and light. Then he took a turn or two across the room. Finally he spoke. At first his tone was cool and even, but as he proceeded his voice betrayed a depth of feeling which he seemed to try in vain to conceal.

"Young man," he said, "it is a mistake to suppose that your father was the cause of the terrible fate which overtook my daughter, or of the ruin of poor Peter Cajelnar's fortunes. It is true that he furnished the occasion; hardly more. But if, knowing this, the fortune which has resulted partly from that unhappy deed and which now is yours, seems to you unfit for use and enjoyment by a man of high principle—for this I take you to be—cast it into the sea, into the streets, burn it, bestow it upon the needy, waste it in revels, burn it like a thing accursed, but do not add to the sorrows of that unhappy land, of that unhappy man and his devoted daughter, or to the burdens of my old age, by seeking to send him back to an ungrateful and murderous people; back to his death, sir, I tell you. It would be madness, nothing less."

The old man's manner, no less than his words,

was impressive, and for a moment even Kenwood was shaken in his purpose.

But neither the fate of Peter Cajelnar, nor of his daughter, nor yet their own, was in the hands of these men.

As the ex-consul stopped speaking there came a knock at the door and a message was handed to Lanier. He read it and without comment handed it to Mathews, who, after reading it, passed it silently to Kenwood. It was the hasty note which Julia Cajelnar had written as she hurried forth after discovering the absence of her father.

"Montgomery has been here," it said, "and my father is gone. Follow me to the house on the dunes."

The three men looked at each other blankly, but Lanier was quick to take the lead.

"There is no time to lose," he cried. "I was fearful of this, and unless I am mistaken they mean business this time. Mr. Kenwood, will you accompany us?"

"Yes, yes," said Kenwood, "there is nothing else that I can do."

Meanwhile Julia Cajelnar was hurrying across Long Island and across the bay to the house on Water Island where she believed her father to have gone. The morning was well advanced

when she reached the narrow strip near the house, and with a sinking heart she pushed forward over the heavy sand. But when she reached the house her heart leaped with joy, for she heard voices, and among them that of her father.

Without hesitation she entered and hastened to the room from which the voices came. Montgomery, Zanaka, and the other native were there with Cajelnar. Her father sprang from his chair, an expression of distress and annoyance coming from his lips as she entered.

"This comes of your accursed delay," he said to Montgomery angrily.

"Father!" cried the girl, throwing her arms about him.

He stroked her dark hair gently,—he was always gentle with her,—and kissed her softly on the forehead.

"Why have you come here, my child?" he asked.

"Father, come home with me, come away," she pleaded.

"Hush, I am going back to my people, child, to take my place again, where God placed me."

"But how can you leave me, father? Am I nothing, that you leave me so?"

Cajelnar still stroked her dark, lustrous hair

softly, and he spoke tenderly, though with a far-away expression on his face which showed that he was thinking most of that far-off land where he hoped to be a man and a king again.

"I would not leave you, child, if I might follow the simple dictates of a father's heart," he said, "but I am king as well as father, and those others are the king's children, calling for him over the seas; they are many and you are one, though dearer than the rest, and there are those who will care for you while the others are in darkness. I go to lead them back to the light. Let me go, child. You cannot know as I know, or feel as I feel; yet you were born a princess; let your heart speak; it will tell you why I go."

Suddenly the girl drew herself up proudly, and as she looked at her father there came a new expression over her beautiful face.

"My heart tells me why you go," she said, "and it shames me that I have sought to hinder you. Father, if you are a king, I also am the daughter of a king. Take me with you, that I may help to lead our people from their darkness to the light."

"No, no," said Cajelnar, "it must not be."

"Take me with you, oh, take me," pleaded the girl.

During this dialogue Montgomery and Zanaka

remained motionless and silent. Montgomery regarded the girl with a growing sense of admiration, which, however, he took care to conceal from Zanaka, whose attitude toward her was evidently one of the most intense dislike. Zanaka now sought to interpose.

"It would be most unwise, excellency," he said respectfully, but the lines of his dark face deepened with the effort which it cost him to conceal his real feelings.

Zanaka's opposition seemed to arouse Cajelnar.

"Why unwise?" he demanded almost hotly.

The aged native stooped his shoulders cringing, and spoke apologetically, though his eyes gleamed.

"The feelings of our people—" he began, but Cajelnar cut him short haughtily.

"She is their princess, and my daughter," he said coldly. "She is of the blood. What feeling can they have toward her, except one of welcome?"

Zanaka made no reply, but shrugged his shoulders. Montgomery now joined in the discussion.

"Father Zanaka is over-cautious," he said smoothly. "I think that it is most desirable that the princess should accompany us."

Julia cast a surprised and grateful glance at

Montgomery, but he was looking away from her and she did not catch the expression upon his face.

"Father, let me come," she pleaded.

Meanwhile Zanaka moved across the room to the corner where Montgomery was standing, and began to expostulate with that chivalrous person.

Montgomery answered him gravely in a low tone. Zanaka seemed to be silenced though not satisfied. The question now rested with Cajelnar for determination. He seemed to hesitate, moved by conflicting impulses.

And now, across the water, there came to them the booming of a gun; once, twice, thrice it sounded.

"At last!" cried Montgomery.

He ran to the window and looked out. Beyond the bar a long, low, black-painted steamer was now within view. Presently a boat was lowered, and sent shoreward.

The four men began to prepare for departure.

"Father, let me come," pleaded the girl.

"Excellency!" protested Zanaka.

Cajelnar threw up his head and took his daughter's hand in his.

"She shall go," he said.

Zanaka's face grew rigid and his eyes gleamed again. Montgomery smiled curiously and turned

away. The girl drew her father's proud head down and kissed him. The kiss spoke of devotion, of protecting love, but also it spoke of pride and joy in his determination. Cajelnar already looked a new man. He walked with an elastic step, holding his head high, his tall figure erect and vigorous. There was a trace of excitement in his eyes, and a color something more than natural in his cheeks, but he commanded himself perfectly.

"Come," he said, and with his daughter by his side he left the house and walked toward the shore. A moment later the five were on board the small boat, speeding out toward the steamer.

After receiving the note from Julia Cajelnar Lanier, Mathews, and Kenwood hurried away from the ex-consul's lodgings, a terrible weight of dread and anxiety tugging at the heart of each. They said little to each other during the long, tedious journey, although inwardly they cursed the schedules, which were against them, and the slowness of the train, when at last it left the station. When they reached the bay, the breeze was so light that with every inch of canvas spread they scarcely crept across the surface of the listless water.

When they reached the island it was well on

past noon. Kenwood was in the lead as they hurried across the sand lots to the hut. Without waiting for his companions to come up he dashed inside the building and called aloud. But there came no answer. He moved rapidly from room to room, but no sign of life rewarded him. The house, he saw, was deserted.

As he retraced his steps he met the ex-consul.

"We are too late," he said.

"Too late," rejoined the ex-consul dejectedly.

"But where is Miss Cajelnar; she must have been here?"

"With her father, probably," said Lanier.

And now as the three men rushed out and to the shore, they saw in the distance the smoke of a steamer heading southward. As they stood there gazing they shook their fists at the receding object in impotent rage.

"What is to be done?" cried Mathews.

"God knows," groaned the ex-consul.

But Kenwood now took the lead.

"Done," he cried, "we must follow them, if they lead us to the ends of the earth."

"You are right," said Mathews, grasping Kenwood's hand.

"Yes, you are right," said Lanier, less hopefully, but with a gleam of resolution and determination in his deep set eyes.

"To protect Peter Cajelnar, and restore him to his rightful estate," said Kenwood.

"To rescue and to guard his daughter," cried Mathews.

"To bring them back, please God, before ever they set foot upon that accursed land," said Lanier.

CHAPTER X.

A NIGHT AND A DAY AT MONTEVIDEO.

Now began that remarkable chase around Cape Horn, some of the incidents of which Kenwood several years later detailed in a most admirable series of letters to the *Royal Geographical Journal*. For the purposes of this history, however, it is not deemed necessary, or indeed permissible, to reproduce his fine descriptions and apt comments, interesting and instructive as they are; the thread of narrative must not be lost in a tangle of descriptive excellence or indeed in a tangle of explanation or apology. The story teller is neither essayist, compiler, nor commentator; he moves under orders which include no restful pauses at the wayside fountains of thought. Let him change horses quickly; perhaps eating a hasty meal, without removing his spurs—if, indeed, he remove his hat—but let him up and on again, valiantly. Let it be hoped that the tale he bears may cheer him over many a jaded mile.

One hot night a month after the events narrated

in the preceding chapter the steamer *Occident* lay in the shelter of the semicircular bay opposite the city of Montevideo, discharging by means of lighters a cargo of merchandise which, for the sake of regularity, she had brought with her from the North. She was the steamer upon which Cajelnar and his daughter had embarked under the conduct of Montgomery and the natives of Yajoha. She had arrived in the harbor early in the day, but her unloading had been delayed until late in the afternoon by a host of South American formalities; but now the work was being pushed with rapidity.

Zanaka and Montgomery stood near the rail, watching the laborers as they worked. Zanaka's swarthy face bore an expression of dissatisfaction and displeasure rather more pronounced than usual. The two men spoke to each other in the tongue of the native, which Montgomery managed smoothly enough.

"Fools!" grumbled Zanaka, "we ought to have come without that." He indicated the cargo as he spoke, with a disdainful gesture.

Montgomery, who was smoking, waited to relight his cigar before he answered.

"You have no sense of expediency," he said, as if explaining to a child. "We are not fools, but wise men. Thus we avoid question, suspi-

cion. The delay is short, the benefit is long. Come, be cheerful!"

"The delay; you do not dislike it," observed Zanaka, showing his teeth.

"What do you mean?" demanded Montgomery. His tone was light, but he was watching Zanaka carefully.

Zanaka indicated the companionway leading to the cabin with an expressive gesture.

"She is very beautiful," he said insolently. For the first time Montgomery allowed himself to show annoyance. He faced Zanaka abruptly.

"What do you know about beauty?" he said angrily, "and what is it to you whether she is beautiful or not, or whether I find her so?"

Zanaka's eyes narrowed and he clasped his hands convulsively before him. He spoke fiercely, and with great rapidity, though his tone was low.

"You will try to save her," he said. "It will not be the first time that fair faces have made men traitors. But you shall not save her. Listen! she shall be brought first to the king, and she shall be first condemned, for I will ask it of him. Shall there be another rival to Yharja? Will she endure it and not curse the land anew? She shall be condemned first and her father after."

"Hush! speak lower, you fool," said Montgomery.

He had caught sight of Miss Cajelnar who was coming up the companion way to the deck. Zanaká saw her also now, and the expression of savage hatred deepened upon his face as he slunk silently away. Julia had drawn back as she saw Montgomery, but he advanced toward her with easy freedom.

"You are wise to come on deck," he said lightly to her, "for it is terribly hot below; up here, there is almost a breeze."

They walked to the rail on the side away from the lighter and the noise of the unloading of the cargo. The moon was shining full and clear, and to the west the headland of Cerro stood out huge and majestic in contrast with the low-lying coast line. An old Spanish fort below it frowned distrustfully upon them across the waters.

The girl was not in a mood for conversation and for a long time she stood leaning upon the rail without, apparently, taking note of Montgomery's presence. Presently there was the sound of the lighter moving away from the steamer. The last of the cargo had been taken off.

"Ah, we are clear at last," said Montgomery.

"Shall we sail to-night?" asked the girl.

"No, we cannot. The custom house will not

allow it. We cannot get away until noon tomorrow probably."

"I am glad," said the girl, "I wish to go ashore in the morning." She looked up at him brightly, pleased at the thought.

He moved a trifle nearer her, watching her face in the moonlight.

"I also am glad," he said.

She was looking away again toward the towering headlands, and scarcely heard him. But he drew nearer still, and continued in a low, insistent tone:

"I am glad because it means that this voyage will be one day longer; that I shall be near you one day more," he said.

Still she did not seem to hear him.

"And you are so beautiful," he said.

She answered him now, but without changing her position or looking toward him. She spoke lightly.

"And you," she said, "are—impertinent."

He frowned at her words, but went on in his low, insistent tone.

"Why do you say that?" he said. "Why is it not permitted to me to tell you that you are beautiful? Why not since—I love you?"

The girl drew away from him.

"Hush," she said coldly; "this is folly."

"Folly or not, it is true," said Montgomery passionately. "No, **you** must listen to me; you shall not go away."

The girl had attempted to turn to go to the cabin where her father was, but Montgomery barred the way.

"Let me pass," she said with determination.

"First listen to me, I will not let you go."

She tried to dodge by him, but he seized her arm and held her.

"Listen," he said boldly, "you think you can slight me, turn me off. But I warn you, you are in great danger and I alone can save you."

She looked at him for a breathless moment, her dark eyes big with contempt and aversion.

"Let me go," she said. "If I were in danger, I would perish rather than be saved by such as you."

She wrenched herself free and disappeared into the cabin. Montgomery watched her as she went.

"I believe she would," he muttered. But if the thought brought with it regret or remorse it had vanished in a moment, for he stopped Zanaka as he passed him and spoke to him in an undertone.

"It will be time enough to act when we are out of this harbor," Montgomery said.

Zanaka nodded. "Yes, but not later," he said.

Early the next morning a boat was sent ashore with an officer of the steamer, to comply with some of the numerous customs regulations, and Julia went with it.

She left the ship's officer at the wharf and walked slowly up into the town. From the bay she had seen the tall side towers of the cathedral which stood on the south side of the Plaza de la Constitucion, opposite the senate house, the law courts, and the prison. In this direction she turned, guided by the towers. When she reached the Plaza de la Constitucion she entered the cathedral.

No service was in progress, but in a high arched gallery a choir of boys practiced an anthem, their clear young voices swelling with exquisite sweetness through the vacant edifice. The girl entered one of the pews, and seated herself to listen.

She did not see that another person had entered a moment after her, but he advanced now and stood beside the pew where she sat. Presently she looked up and saw him standing there gazing at her. She gave a quick cry, with a note of joy in it.

"Mr. Kenwood!" she exclaimed.

He took the hand which she extended to him and held it gravely.

"At last!" he said.

Her eyes were growing big with wonder as she looked at him.

He spoke rapidly. "I was with Lanier when your note came," he said. "I accompanied him in his search for you, and when we found that you were gone we followed as quickly as we could fit out a vessel. But that gave you a long lead. We sighted you off the Windward Islands, but lost you in the storm. At Rio we discovered that you had left port but five hours before we came."

"Who is with you?" asked the girl.

"Lanier and Mathews."

"They are not on shore?"

"Yes, but they went to the custom house. You see, I was more fortunate."

She smiled brightly.

"I wish I might see them, if only for a minute," she said.

"If you will wait here, perhaps I can bring them," said Kenwood. But he showed no great enthusiasm for going. She was smiling and looking up at him with her wonderful eyes.

"Yes, you might bring them here," she said dreamily.

Still he did not move.

"But first tell me of your father, of yourself," he said eagerly.

"All is well with us. You know that I share my father's wish to return to Yajoha?"

"Yes, I know. Do you believe that they will receive him?"

"Zanaka and Montgomery declare it. Zanaka is the second in the priesthood, and his influence is great."

"But is he acting honestly?"

"I do not know. I distrust him, but I have no reason for it."

"You distrust him, and yet you go?" he said.

"With my father, yes," she said simply.

"With my father and to his people."

As he looked at her a great longing to save her from the sacrifice which she was making gained control of him. For a space he forgot his own duty, his own resolution, and spoke to her earnestly, almost passionately, urging her to give up her determination and, with Lanier, to return. By force, at sea, he told her—for he spoke quite wildly, they would rescue her father and together they would return, abandoning the mad enterprise upon which they had embarked. He said nothing of himself, but she understood him and only smiled, shaking her head.

She raised her eyes to his as he finished speaking, and something in her clear gaze rebuked him, and the knowledge of his duty and of hers returned.

"Forgive me," he said shamefacedly.

"You would do as I am doing," she said softly.

"Yes," he answered.

There was a long silence, broken by Kenwood. "Listen," he said, "for we do not know when we shall meet again. From now until the end we will be near you constantly. When you reach Yajoha, we will be there also. All that can be done to protect your father and you we will do, if it comes to that. But this is my duty, as well as yours. I cannot explain to you why but it is my duty, and I shall fulfill it."

But she looked at him in sudden alarm.

"No, no," she said, "you must not risk your life in this enterprise. I have a right to offer up my own, but—yours—" she paused, and the color showed suddenly beneath her clear dark skin.

And now to Kenwood there came an overwhelming impulse, so strong that in its great flood it swept away every circumstance and consideration save that he stood in the presence of this glorious girl and that he loved her.

He leaned over toward her, and she raised her beautiful dark eyes to his.

"I love you, I love you," he whispered.

She listened, breathless.

"You are my life, and my life is yours. How should I not be near you in danger, to aid, to protect, perhaps with you to die?"

There was a breathless pause, and for a moment she turned her head away. But presently she looked up at him again, a soft, sweet light in her eyes.

"You should be near," she whispered.

They said no more; there was no need.

But now looking up, Kenwood beheld Montgomery standing in the aisle near the doorway. He was smiling in his cool, indifferent way, but he stood there waiting.

CHAPTER XI.

CAPTIVES.

As he saw Montgomery standing there Kenwood gave an exclamation of surprise and dismay. He had not wished Montgomery and his party to know that he was following them. The exclamation drew the girl's attention in the direction toward which Kenwood was looking, and she also saw Montgomery. But if his presence annoyed her, she gave no sign. She walked down the aisle, Kenwood following her, and would have passed Montgomery with a cold nod of recognition, but he stopped her.

"We are only awaiting your return, to set sail," he said in deferential tones. "You were intending to return?" He glanced at Kenwood mockingly.

Kenwood's hands closed convulsively until his finger nails cut into the palms of his hands, but he said nothing, passing out behind Miss Cajenar. Once outside the girl held out her hand to Kenwood and he took it and held it, unwilling to let her go.

"Remember," he said, "I shall be near you always, until the end."

"Yes, yes, I will remember."

Thus they stood for a space, each dreading the parting, each knowing that it must be. Presently she withdrew her hand slowly.

"My love, my love!" he whispered.

Her eyes were full of tears, and she could not speak. She made a pitiful, tender little gesture, and turned away. With a heavy heart he watched her as she disappeared in the direction of the wharf.

Yet, if his heart was heavy, there was joy there also. She loved him. In this strange land parting with her with the knowledge that before they met again untold dangers might befall, in the face of the mad enterprise to which she had given herself, with his own duty and responsibility before him, Kenwood felt that above and beyond all rose the fact that she loved him. For a moment joy in the present, and hope for their future, drove dread and anxiety from his mind. He moved forward with a buoyant step to rejoin his companions.

When Kenwood, the ex-consul, and Mathews, standing on the beach of Water Island witnessed the departure of the steamer upon which Cajel-nar and his daughter had embarked, they wasted

little time in vain distresses, but hastened back to the city, where, by rare good fortune, Kenwood stumbled upon an opportunity to take into his service an excellent sea-going yacht, of large dimensions and considerable speed. The work of fitting the vessel with such supplies and appliances as were necessary for an extended cruise began at once, and was pursued with the utmost rapidity; but, do what they would, the delay seemed almost endless to the impatient men. From a harbor pilot they learned the name of the vessel in which Cajelnar had embarked and at the custom house they discovered that she had cleared with cargo and passengers for Montevideo. As soon as possible the three men set out, cruising down the coast at good speed.

Their departure had been somewhat curiously delayed by Mathews, who was strangely absent when the time for setting sail arrived. They waited for him during several long and impatient hours. When he did arrive he was accompanied by an express wagon, half-filled with boxes. The loading of these upon the yacht and into his own stateroom was accomplished under his personal supervision.

The cruise down the coast had been without incident, and it was not until the Windward Islands were reached that they sighted the vessel

which they were pursuing. They kept her within view a part of one day, but one of the hurricanes for which the West Indies are noted, came up suddenly, and the ships were driven apart. The Occident touched at Rio de Janeiro but departed five hours before the arrival there of Kenwood and his party on board the Valiant. From Rio they continued their voyage of pursuit, and anchored off Montevideo after ascertaining that the Occident was still in the harbor there. The Valiant did not enter the harbor, riding at anchor outside. Lanier and Mathews came ashore with Kenwood on the morning of his meeting with Miss Cajelnar in the old cathedral, but the men had separated on different errands, and Kenwood had been alone when, so suddenly that his heart almost stopped beating, he saw the girl walk slowly along the south side of Plaza de la Constitucion and enter the edifice. He had followed her without a moment's hesitation, and the scenes which have just been described followed.

Soon after Miss Cajelnar's return the Occident steamed out of the bay and headed again to the southward. By nightfall the vessel was out of sight of the land, and had begun the long cruise of the Patagonian coast. And now the attitude of those on board the steamer toward Cajelnar

and his daughter changed. Zanaka lost his servile manner as if by magic. Montgomery's cool indifference changed also, and he went about with a smile of satisfaction and triumph upon his face.

The next morning Cajelnar had finished his breakfast and, coming into the cabin from the dining room, moved toward the companion way intending to go on deck. Immediately the passage was barred by the native who had accompanied Zanaka during the period of the negotiations.

"Excellency," he said, showing his teeth ironically.

"Out of my way," ordered Cajelnar, his eyes blazing.

The native did not move. He was a man of tremendous stature and his huge body completely barred the companion way. He made no response to Cajelnar's demand, but stood there, blocking the way, and looking at the ex-king with a mocking smile.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded Cajelnar.

The native did not know. Father Zanaka had ordered that neither the king—the fellow spoke with an exaggeration of politeness—nor the princess, should be allowed to go on deck. They were to be a permitted the freedom of the cabin. This was for the present, the native added.

"Father Zanaka ordered it?" demanded Cajelnar, shaking with anger.

"Yes, excellency."

"Then send him here."

The burly native did not move, but at this moment Zanaka descended and entered the cabin. Although he had abandoned his servile attitude, he was apologetic.

His excellency must understand, he said, that there were certain formalities which must be gone through before he could be restored to his former position as ruler of the island of Yajoha. His long absence, as well as other circumstances, made this imperative. Zanaka's duty was to present Cajelnar to the acting ruler of Yajoha, when ample justice would be done.

This did not explain the detention below deck, and when this was pointed out by Cajelnar, Zanaka continued, still apologetically. His excellency must know, then, that certain persons who had sought to prevent his return to Yajoha had been seen at Montevideo, having followed the Occident from the North, and even now their yacht could be seen to the eastward cruising along at a pace which made it evident that she was pursuing the steamer, for, by her superior speed, the yacht might easily leave them far astern if she desired to do so. It was deemed best

that his excellency and the princess should not communicate, by signal or otherwise, with these persons.

Cajelnar was almost beside himself with rage at the cool assumption of Zanaka, but the latter was unmoved. Protest and command were alike useless. Cajelnar finally retired in silence to a distant end of the cabin where he remained during the greater part of the day. His daughter, now sure that her worst fears were about to be realized, sought to comfort him as best she could. Montgomery did not appear during the day.

On the following day a similar scene was enacted. Montgomery still kept out of view. After nightfall on the second day, however, Cajelnar having retired to his stateroom, Montgomery appeared. Julia was still in the cabin, trying to read. Montgomery came up to her, and spoke to her familiarly.

"Come up on deck with me," he said, "I want to talk with you."

The girl looked up with surprise.

"It is not permitted," she said, her lip curling.

He fixed his eyes upon her with a curious gaze; there was amusement and insolence in it, and yet there was something else.

"It is permitted, if I wish it," he said.

"Then you are responsible for the indignity which is being heaped upon my father?"

Montgomery shrugged his shoulders. "No, I am not exactly responsible," he said. "Zanaka ordered it; he has his own views."

"But you could prevent it?"

"Yes, certainly."

"You will do so?"

"Yes, on condition."

"I do not understand you."

"Yet I told you something only a few days ago which should help you to understand," he said, looking at her boldly.

"Oh, that!" she cried, drawing back.

"Exactly."

The girl regarded him with horror-stricken eyes. She saw that she was in the power of this man; that her own fate, and the fate of her father rested in his hands. He began to speak now with earnestness.

"You see," he said, "that you were not so wise when you said that you would perish rather than escape your danger by my aid, for that is precisely the problem that may be presented to you. I am in control here. Do you know what they are doing with your father?"

The girl made no answer, still looking at him with her great dark, horror-stricken eyes. Montgomery went on:

"They are taking him back to deliver him over

to the Priest of Yharja, who is king. Poor fool, he thought the people wanted him to return. God! they would tear him to pieces, if the priest said the word, and he will say the word unless I prevent him."

The cool villainy of his words and tone were more than the girl could comprehend.

"Are you human!" she gasped.

He laughed lightly. "Or a fiend, you think," he said. "Well, human, perhaps, since I love you."

The girl vouchsafed no reply, and there was silence for a space.

"Come," said Montgomery at length. "I can place your father on his throne again, and win for him honor and welcome from his people."

"Ah, if you could, and would."

"I can and will, on condition."

There was a long silence, the man waiting, the girl thinking rapidly.

"What is the condition?" she asked finally.

"Now you are sensible!" he said. He drew nearer to her as he spoke and placed one hand familiarly upon her shoulder.

"My condition is—you," he said, stooping low and looking into her face with burning eyes.

The girl sprang to her feet and shook him off as if he were some poisonous thing.

"I would not do it, if you already had your knife at my father's throat," she said. "Do you think that I am afraid? Do what you can do, but seek no more to make your vile bargain with me. No suffering that you could bring upon me, none even that you could bring upon my father, could induce me to yield to you."

He laughed cynically.

"So you say now," he said.

She made no reply, but walked slowly to her stateroom and left him.

As she disappeared Zanaka thrust his head inside the doorway, showed his teeth unpleasantly, and moved away.

"Fair faces have made traitors before now," he muttered.

CHAPTER XII.

AN ORATOR AND THE RESULT OF HIS ORATION.

YAJOHA, the principal island of a group in that vast region known as Polynesia is, like its neighbors and according to the well-founded conjecture of science, of volcanic origin. From a central peak of no great height the land slopes gently shoreward. A coral reef fringes the coast at some distance from the shore, and within, between the reef and the beach, there is a lagoon-like stretch of still water. The reef is broken in the center on the eastward side of the island, and opposite the beach, upon the island, a fresh water stream flows gently from the higher interior. The town or village of Yajoha is situated upon the north of this stream. The break in the reef is large enough to permit the entrance of a small vessel. The climate of the island is hot and moist, and the vegetation is rich. From shore to summit the island is clothed in a deep cloak of the most luxuriant verdure. Even upon the rocks which stand out here and there upon

the hillside, ferns, club-mosses and even small shrubs grow plentifully. To the south of the stream, on the low land near the shore there is a grove of cocoanut palms, cool and shady and delightful. Within this grove, which in a degree is sacred, stands the temple of Yharja, rebuilt now, and within it the shrine has been restored. The town shows a curious combination of savagery and civilization. A few modern buildings, built partly of stone, partly of wood from the groves, stand upon the outskirts, above the old town, where are the rude huts of the natives.

The passage around the Horn had been a stormy one, and the steamer *Occident* showed plainly the signs of the weather and the buffeting which she had encountered when, one fine, clear morning, she hove to beyond the reef and dropped her anchor. Some of the natives, having seen the steamer approaching and being of a turn of mind easily excited by curiosity, put out toward her in their canoes; but those who came within hearing distance turned suddenly back at a word from Zanaka. Presently a boat was launched from the steamer, and Zanaka and Montgomery came ashore. A crowd of natives, men and women, gathered near the landing place, though at a respectful distance, and as the two men came ashore the natives bowed them-

selves low, doing honors after the customs of the island. Zanaka and Montgomery proceeded at once to the residence of the Priest of Yharja, the ruler of the island. There they remained for a long time, in consultation.

During the passage around Cape Horn and from the Chilian coast to the island of Yajoha the treatment accorded to Cajelnar and his daughter by their captors—for it was soon evident that they were as surely prisoners as if they had been confined in a dungeon—had been characterized by increasing restraint, though strict care had been taken both by Montgomery and Zanaka to guard the physical comfort of both the man and the girl. Except during the storm, when it had seemed necessary to allow them a greater freedom, the conspirators had sought as much as possible to keep father and daughter separate. For several days before Yajoha was sighted, the two were confined to their state-rooms, under lock and key.

Cajelnar accepted his captivity, after the first few days, in silence. It was significant of the motive which had led him to embark upon the enterprise, that through it all, despite the indignities which were heaped upon him, he maintained the proud demeanor which had returned to him in the hour of his final determination. Not

even when Julia sought to comfort him with gentle, tender words did he sink back into that attitude of helpless, hopeless endurance which had marked him as a broken and disappointed man during the later years of his long exile. That the men in whom he had trusted were traitors to him, he no longer doubted; but he had done his part, he had cast his life into the balance for them. Whatever the result, he had played the part of a man and a king. Therefore he held his head high, and answered their insults with silence.

Once or twice Montgomery had sought to renew his offer to Julia but she repelled him with such vehemence that for the most part he let her alone, though she was always conscious that he was watching her, waiting for the time when she should be ready to yield.

But the time, she knew, never would come, whatever else the future held in store. It was not only that, because she was young and full of life and energy, hope refused to leave her, and that, without knowing the method of it, she could not but believe that deliverance was possible, though not certain or even probable; besides this she was conscious that neither her duty to her father, nor to the people of Yajoha, demanded that she should yield. Her mind acted strongly,

with a direct, vigorous understanding, which threw off quickly the specious impulse which, to a weaker person, might have seemed to point a worthy, a holy martyrdom. She had, indeed, more the spirit of the warrior than of the martyr. With both she shared a willingness to die for her cause, but with the former she shared also the longing, the determination, to die where the fight was thickest, striking as long as strength lasted, yielding to death alone.

When the consultation at the house of the Priest of Yharja was concluded Zanaka came out alone. Before him he gathered a group of young men, natives, who wore ornaments indicating that they were couriers. He spoke to them for a few moments, after which they hurried away, scattering in all directions. Soon the town, which up to this time had been comparatively quiet, began to swarm with dusky natives. They centered at the public square, questioning each other and wagging their heads.

Zanaka, meanwhile, had returned to the steamer. When the people saw him returning half an hour later in a boat which contained two other figures also, they would have rushed pell-mell to the landing, but the couriers, who seemed also to be the guardians of the peace, restrained them and they remained in the vicinity of the

square. Despite the impatience of the people the control which the couriers maintained over them was excellent, and Zanaka was allowed to land with his captives, Cajelnar and his daughter, without molestation. They walked silently to the palace, a guard, led by Zanaka's companion, following in their wake. Cajelnar's hands were bound behind his back. On the wrist of Julia's left arm a heavy band had been clasped; to this a short chain was attached and the end fastened to the cords which held Cajelnar's hands together.

They entered the palace and there remained for a long time, while the crowd at the public square grew to larger proportions, the impatience of the people meanwhile increasing rapidly.

When everything was in readiness a procession was formed at the palace, and moved slowly toward the square. First came the Priest of Yharja, the wonderful arrangement of his head-dress marking him as the chief personage in all the gathering, and by his side, Zanaka, whose sour and swarthy visage was now expressive of the keenest satisfaction and delight. Behind them walked distinguished persons from the household of the priest, their sacred offices indicated by the ornaments which they wore and by

the manner of their headdress. Next came the chief officials of the village; then the captives, followed by the guard.

Montgomery was not present. He remained within the palace.

In the center of the square there was a stone platform ornamented only by an upright pillar upon which there was an inscription done in rude, irregular characters. To this platform the procession made its way slowly, the people separating to allow a passageway, then closing in again, so that when the officials reached the platform they were completely surrounded by the dusky horde.

The priest or king seated himself in the center of the platform, the others finding places near him, each according to his rank. The guard closed around the captives to the rear. There was a beating of some curious instrument, like, but unlike, a drum, and then the ceremony began.

First the Priest of Yharja spoke. He did not rise, and his words seemed purely formal, for the people paid little heed, though they were silent most respectfully.

Then up rose Zanaka, tall, spare of figure, his keen eyes flashing with energy and excitement. In a moment the people closed inward, watching him eagerly. His reputation as an orator must

already have been established, for the people seemed to know that he would stir them; already they felt his power, and a shiver like the moving of leaves in the forest when the wind blows fitfully, passed over the assemblage.

Zanaka was a true orator. There was nothing spectacular or exaggerated in his manner. He began to speak quite easily, in a low, clear voice.

The people listened breathlessly. Soon every gesture which the speaker made, every change in the tone of his voice, were reflected by his hearers. He had not spoken five minutes before it was evident that he would have his will with them. But he spoke on, his earnestness and eloquence increasing as he proceeded.

When Zanaka had done, the priest motioned to the leader of the guard and he led Cajelnar forward; Julia, still held by the band about her wrist, behind him. They both stood proudly, their heads held high.

"Speak," said the priest to Cajelnar.

There was a moment of extreme interest and curiosity among the people.

Cajelnar was silent.

"Speak," repeated the priest. His tone was not one of command, but rather of permission.

Cajelnar held his head a trifle higher.

"I am king," he said. "It is not fit that I

should address the people." This was according to a custom of Yajoha. No ruler ever took the place of advocate or orator.

There was a gleaming of teeth among the assembled natives; some seemed to approve Cajelnar's action; others were amused by it.

Meanwhile Julia, nothing daunted, would have spoken in defense of her father, but he stopped her with a quick look and a word.

Probably some crude ideas of formal justice were satisfied by this ceremony, but from the moment of the beginning of it there never was any doubt as to the result. The question of condemnation seemed, indeed, to be submitted to the people; but swayed by such an orator as Zanaka their verdict was not uncertain.

Cajelnar and his daughter were condemned—to death the priest said in pronouncing sentence. The manner of their death he did not indicate, but the people seemed to understand. Now the captives were led away, not this time to the palace, but across the stream, which was spanned by a rude bridge of palm wood, to the grove near the temple. The priest and Zanaka, followed by the other officers, returned to the palace and the crowd slowly dispersed.

Cajelnar and his daughter were now separated, and taken to two houses or huts within the

grove. Here the guard was increased, but within the circle of their keepers they were allowed their freedom. Two native girls took their places within the hut occupied by Julia, and offered to her such service as she required.

During the ordeal through which she had passed the girl had borne herself with a dignity and pride the counterpart of that displayed by the father. But now that she was beyond the gaze of the people, the grief and dread which oppressed her was, for the moment, almost overpowering. She motioned to the two native girls to leave her, and with looks of sympathy, they left the hut, crouching within call near the entrance.

Julia threw herself upon a couch of some soft, fibrous material which had been prepared for her. But despite the dread and the fear there were thoughts which strengthened and supported her still. Her heart beat quicker with an exultant pride when she thought of the kingly dignity which her father had shown before the people during the mockery of a trial. She could not find even now in her heart a regret that he had come, and that she had come with him.

And hope, too, found its place in her heart, for she was not one to give herself over to long despair. As she lay there alone in the hut, the

remembrance of Kenwood's words came to her, cheering her, not so much by the hope they brought as by the wealth of love and devotion which she found in them.

"Remember, I shall be near you until the end," he had whispered.

Could he be near now, she wondered; and wondering she smiled, for the thought was sweet.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ONLY CHANCE.

It is not to be supposed that there was none in Yajoha who favored Cajelnar, or at least disapproved of the sentence which had been passed upon the ex-king and his daughter. Indeed it was in the fear that this element—which he had striven with all his might to exterminate—might yet prove too strong for him, that the priest of Yharja had sent Zanaka, his most trusted follower, to bring Cajelnar back to his death. With Cajelnar out of the way the priest-ruler felt safe upon the throne which he had usurped. While the ex-king lived, his successor felt that daily he was in danger. His plan of bringing the ex-king back resulted from the discovery that already some of the natives were holding communication with Cajelnar. The priest promptly executed the conspirators and continuing the correspondence through Zanaka lured Cajelnar on to his doom.

But, during the mockery of a trial in the public

square, no voice had been raised in Cajelnar's favor, and during the interval between the condemnation and the day set for the execution of the sentences, none but his keepers came near him. Yet he was treated with a certain consideration, as was his daughter, and suffered no personal indignity save his imprisonment. This was true also of Julia; indeed the two girls who had been allowed to remain with her seemed to regard her with affectionate sympathy.

In one thing only Zanaka had failed. He had sought to have the execution of the girl fixed to take place first, but the priest had refused to consent to this plan. He did not share Zanaka's intense hatred of the girl, though he was willing enough to get her out of the way. Zanaka's hatred sprang from a source in which the priest did not share.

A week passed swiftly, and only three days remained before the day set for the execution. As the days followed each other Julia Cajelnar gradually abandoned hope of relief and now she awaited her fate with characteristic fortitude. For a day or two after the beginning of her imprisonment in the palm grove she had half-expected, not that Kenwood would save her and her father, for she allowed herself no hope so wild, but that in some way she would

hear of him, would know that he was near. But as time went by and nothing indicated his presence, she began to fear that he had met with disaster, perhaps death, while seeking to aid her, and so in her thoughts of him she found but a pitiful comfort. She knew that if he had failed it had been because strength to follow her had failed. She never for an instant doubted his devotion and his faith.

From the position of her prison hut in the grove it was not possible to see the ocean beyond the reef, but on the fourth day before that fixed for the execution the girl noticed a peculiar excitement among the keepers and guards about her. When she had an opportunity, she asked one of the native girls about it.

"A steamer has anchored just beyond the reef," the girl told her.

Julia's heart leaped to her throat, but she strove to conceal her interest.

"There was one there already," she said.

"The black one?"

"Yes."

"It sailed away—days ago," said the girl, volubly. "This is another. It is white."

"From where did it come?" Julia asked.

The girl did not know. The white steamer had been there at anchor when the morning

broke. It must have arrived in the night. Some of the natives had gone out toward it in their canoes, but they had not been able to see any one except a few sailors, and had returned.

Later in the day the girl came running up with great news. A boat had been lowered from the steamer and was approaching the shore. It contained three men. The priest at the palace was preparing to receive them.

After leaving Montevideo the Valiant kept for many days in the wake of the steamer which bore Cajelnar and his daughter, but when Cape Horn was reached the ships encountered a terrible storm. The Occident, much larger than the Valiant and better able to stand the fearful buffeting of the waves, had ridden the tempest out with little difficulty, although she, indeed, had sustained some damage. But the Valiant had been for a time in actual danger of foundering. She had been driven from her course, and when the storm subsided it found her far away to the southward. She was obliged to lay to for several days for repairs.

Under such conditions as these the state of mind of the three passengers, Kenwood, Lanier, and Mathews, was one well approaching despair. When they arrived off Yajoha it was with the terrible fear that they might be too late, and

that the fate of Cajelnar and his daughter might already have been determined and carried out.

They arrived off Yajoha during the night. It was easy to see that everything was quiet on the island, and they thought best to wait for the morning before beginning to act. It had been decided that as soon as it was possible after the breaking of dawn, Kenwood and Mathews should go ashore, in the most formal and open manner and, if they found, as they feared, that Cajelnar had not been welcomed in the manner which had been promised him, make a demand for information concerning him; for his release if he had been imprisoned.

This plan was carried out. The two men were received at the boat landing by an escort of natives, and conducted with a great show of respect to the palace. There they were received by the Priest of Yharja, Zanaka, and Montgomery. Kenwood acted as spokesman, addressing Zanaka, who interpreted to the priest. Montgomery took little part in the interview, though he listened attentively, and once or twice corrected or assisted Zanaka in his interpretation of Kenwood's words.

If Kenwood had hoped to intimidate the ruler of Yajoha, he soon found how futile his plan had been. The priest frankly admitted that

Cajelnar and his daughter were on the island, that they were under restraint, and that they were to be executed. He pointed out that the ex-king had returned of his own will, and that both he and his daughter were subject to the laws of their native country.

To Kenwood's appeal for the release of Cajelnar the priest turned a more attentive ear. Kenwood hinted at ransom, and for a moment the usurper seemed to hesitate. Suddenly he turned to one of his attendants.

"Bring him here," he said.

Cajelnar was brought to the palace, his hands again fastened behind his back. A gleam of recognition and interest shone in his eye for a moment as he saw Mathews, but he said nothing. He still held his head high, with a look of pride upon his face, and he stood tall, erect, and determined.

To him the priest now spoke in their native tongue. Kenwood and Mathews, neither of whom could understand what was being said, watched the men intently. But whatever it was that the priest was saying, it made no impression upon Peter Cajelnar. Once or twice he seemed to try with a vehement protest to cut the usurper short, but the priest continued, apparently making some offer to Cajelnar. When he had done,

the ex-king answered, and Zanaka, turning with a smile of triumph to Kenwood, interpreted:

"He says that he would not leave this island, even if it were possible," said Zanaka. "He seeks to be restored to the throne of Yajoba or to die."

The traitorous old villain interpreted these words of Cajelnar's without a tremor. Montgomery, who understood the words as well as the interpretation, listened to Zanaka as he spoke.

"And he is like to be accommodated in the latter," Montgomery said, as Zanaka finished.

After this there was little to be said. Kenwood and his companions returned to their boat. From a chance remark that some one had dropped they had learned that the time of the execution was yet three days distant.

"There is a great deal that may be done in three days," observed Mathews, as they put off for the Valiant. He saw that Kenwood was dejected, and he strove to be cheerful.

"There must be some way to save them," he added.

"There is—or to die with them," said Kenwood.

"I think we won't die," said Mathews, "though I wouldn't run, you know," he added after a pause.

When they reported their interview with the priest to Lanier together with Cajelnar's refusal to accept the release that the usurper had apparently offered to him, the ex-consul shook his head gravely.

"We could set them free—perhaps," he said. "But the trouble is, poor Peter Cajelnar would not come."

"We can carry him away," said Mathews.

The ex-consul smiled. "Perhaps," he said.

Kenwood was pacing up and down the cabin, his brows knit, and his hands clinched.

"I think we can make him king," he cried, facing them suddenly.

"It is our only chance," said the ex-consul.

"At least," said Kenwood, "we can try; we can strike a blow."

"Yes, we can strike a blow," said Lanier.

"The sooner the better," said Mathews.

The visit of Kenwood and Mathews to the Priest of Yharja took place on Tuesday. The execution was to take place on Friday. Lanier, who was acquainted with the customs of the people, said that the execution would take place about four hours after sunset, in the palm grove, for Cajelnar was accused of violating the sanctity of the temple and the expiation was properly to be upon that sacred soil.

For many hours the three men sat anxiously in the cabin going over the situation in all its details as they knew it, and seeking to hit upon a plan of action. One thing seemed clear, that they could not count upon Cajelnar's aid in a programme of mere escape, nor could they hope to take Julia away without him, as long at least as the ex-king was alive. The idea of carrying Cajelnar off against his will, which Mathews had suggested, seemed out of the question, and after a brief examination of it, it was abandoned altogether, as impossible.

They came back soon to the words of Kenwood: "I believe we can make him king." The very boldness of it commended it to consideration, and indeed, it seemed the only means of solving the complicated riddle which confronted them. But how to accomplish it; here was the question. They were three men, with perhaps a score from their crew who could be depended upon to aid them, and against them a horde of savages, their numbers unknown indeed but reaching certainly into the thousands.

The discussion continued for many hours but the plans which were arranged were only preliminary. It was soon recognized that no final decision could be made until the three men were in possession of more complete information, con-

cerning not only the position of the prisoners, and the extent of their guard, but also concerning the approaches to the palace, the strength of the defenses there, and indeed concerning practically the topography of the whole island, which Lanier, despite his residence there, was able but vaguely to remember.

It was agreed that the night should be devoted to reconnoissance. In the meantime Mathews and Lanier, wearied and worn by sleepless nights and days of terrible anxiety and dread, threw themselves upon their couches for a brief rest before the labors of the night. Kenwood, although worn out and in need of sleep, could not join them. He went on deck and paced back and forward, his mind keenly at work, for he was arranging in his mind the details of a plan so bold that its very audacity seemed to augur its success.

CHAPTER XIV

THE EVIL OF THE USE OF STIMULANTS BY A NATIVE GUARD.

DURING the week following their arrival at Yajoha, Montgomery had made no attempt to place himself in communication with Julia, but now as the day of the execution drew near he was moved by an increasing impulse to see her. His power over the Priest of Yharja was not unlimited, though it was considerable. He also had a personal following among the members of a sacred order, called Llamhi. It seemed possible that even yet, if Julia would accede to his designs, he might be able to save her. The chief danger in such an undertaking, he knew, came from Zanaka who watched him with eyes of suspicion. Zanaka's power with the natives and with the priest was very great, and Montgomery dared not give him an opportunity for open and direct hostility. Yet Montgomery was not a man to take great heed of hazards. If he dared not go openly, he made no matter of going secretly, though the immediate personal danger was far greater thus. If he had gone openly,

had interceded for the girl before the priest of Yharja, Zanaka might ultimately have defeated his objects, and undermined his power and position; but going to her secretly, he was at the mercy of the first guard, courting bullet, knife, and cudgel. Yet he chose to go secretly, perhaps because he hoped to bargain with her.

He set out at about 10 o'clock on the night of the visit of Kenwood and Mathews to the palace. He made his way by a circuitous route to the sacred palm grove, crossing the stream by means of a canoe far above the bridge, and moving stealthily from tree to tree toward the vicinity of the hut where Julia Cajelnar was imprisoned. The night was warm and very dark. The fire which often burned before the hut of a captive, kept there by the guard which formed in a semicircle about the entrance, had been extinguished because of the heat, and no illumination pierced the blackness of the grove. Yet as he drew near the hut Montgomery was able to make out some of the forms of the watchers. He clearly discerned the semicircular group near the entrance and at the rear three or four burly natives squatted on the ground. The watchers were sitting upright and though they were silent Montgomery knew that they were alert. It was impossible to reach the hut without attracting their attention.

Slowly, guarding against so much as the snapping of a twig, he crept around to the rear of the hut, and, making a wide circuit, approached the guard who was stationed at the furthestmost corner. The man sat perhaps ten paces from any of his companions. Montgomery crept from tree to tree until with his hand he could almost have reached and touched the fellow.

There was a chance, a desperate one, and Montgomery took it. He wore a belt in which he carried a heavy knife and a brace of pistols. One of these he drew out and with it covered the second nearest guard. The knife he held ready in his left hand.

Then he leaned forward in the darkness and whispered a single word of the native tongue. The sound was not articulate, he breathed it into the darkness, and at first the guard gave no sign. Montgomery waited; he knew that the man must have heard. Presently the guard moved slightly, changing the position of his arms. Montgomery softly returned the pistol to his belt, and put the knife back into its sheath. So far all was well. If the guard had not recognized the signal—Montgomery had had no means of knowing whether he would or not—there would have been a quick bullet for the second and the knife for the first, who would have been upon

him too quick for a shot, and Montgomery would have had a fair chance of escaping among the trees in the darkness. But he breathed softly a sigh of relief as he put his pistol back. The guard now rose and stretched himself, then turned and moved leisurely in the direction from which he had heard the whispered word. Montgomery meanwhile retreated, plunging deeper into the grove. The guard followed him.

When he came up to Montgomery and recognized him, he made a sign of respect, perhaps of reverence.

Montgomery placed his hand upon the native's arm and looked into his face searchingly.

"You do well to answer promptly," he said.

"Yes, excellency."

"Your captive—you must bring her to me, here. I must speak with her."

"But, excellency—" the man began to protest. His face bore an expression of fear and distress.

"You must," said Montgomery firmly.

"I cannot, I cannot—" began the man.

"Why not?" demanded Montgomery.

"It is impossible; I, only, am of Llamhi!"

"But the others are of Yajoha," said Montgomery with a contemptuous shrug. "Here, wait."

Montgomery produced a handful of gold coins.

The guard's eyes glistened. "Wait," said Montgomery again, and he drew forth two large bottles. The guard showed his teeth. "Wait," said Montgomery once more, and unsheathing his knife he added it to the curious collection.

"There," he said contemptuously, "bring her here."

"Excellency," said the guard, this time in delight, not in protest.

"I give you two hours," said Montgomery.

The man started to return to the hut, but turned suddenly.

"She must not escape," he said, alarm on his face.

"She shall not escape—to-night," said Montgomery.

It was well on past midnight when Montgomery, who had waited patiently, crouching beside a tree, observed two figures coming toward him in the darkness. They were proceeding without any great show of caution, and Montgomery rightly concluded that the contents of the bottles which he had brought had circulated among the natives of the guard more freely than the coins. Julia Cajelnar and the guard who had responded to Montgomery's signal approached.

The girl came forward eagerly. She was thinking of Kenwood, of Lanier, of Mathews. Hope was singing in her veins.

When she saw that it was Montgomery to whom she was being conducted, she drew back with a cry of distress and disappointment.

"You!" she cried.

Montgomery shrugged his shoulders.

"I thought that even I might be better than that," he said, indicating the hut.

The girl made no reply but turned as if to go back. Montgomery barred her way.

"Wait and talk to me awhile. Have you so many and is the time so long that I am beneath your notice?" he said with bitter insolence.

And now a sudden longing to be safe and free again, to save her father from his doom, took possession of the girl.

"Ah," she cried, "you could save us if you would!"

He drew nearer and spoke in a low tone, for he did not wish the guard to hear; he knew that he was promising more than, perhaps, he could perform.

"I could set you free, and your father, too," he said.

"Then set us free; I pray you, set us free."

"And for me?"

"For you honor and gratitude—the thought of a noble deed done—a noble impulse followed—all that you can ask—except——"

"Except?"

"What you have asked."

He gave a short laugh.

"There is nothing else I want," he said.

The girl shrank back, a shiver passing over her form.

"Never!" she cried.

The guard had withdrawn to a considerable distance. Montgomery now took a step toward the girl.

"There is one other thing I want," he said.

"Ah," she lifted her head, mistaking his meaning.

"And I will take it," he said, smiling cruelly.

In an instant he had his arms around her and bending low would have kissed her as she struggled, but a strong arm caught him by the shoulder and hurled him violently backward. The girl fled to the hut, the guard following her.

Montgomery recovered himself in a moment and advanced toward his assailant. It was Mathews. The young man stood watching him, alert, expecting to be attacked. To attack him seemed indeed at first to be Montgomery's purpose, but if it was he abandoned it, for he stopped short and laughed scornfully, throwing back the hair from his forehead with an expressive gesture.

"You choose to interfere?" he said to Mathews.

"You fiend," said Mathews between his teeth.

"Fair words!" said Montgomery. "See? I set you the example—I do not even wish to quarrel with you."

"Cur!" cried Mathews, beside himself.

Montgomery laughed lightly. "Our conversation will be one-sided if you keep that up. Yet it might pay you to talk. Listen, you wish to save Cajelnar's daughter from death?"

"From death and such as you."

Montgomery shrugged his shoulders. "From death might not be so hard," he said.

"Then death were better," said Mathews, catching his meaning.

"What fools you are," said Montgomery, with a contemptuous gesture. "You only half play the game."

"But we play it fair."

"Fair, and you fail," sneered Montgomery. "See here, I'm not over-loving toward this game that's going on. I'll join with you; we'll put Cajelnar back and after— Well, we'll fight for her, if you like."

"She's not for you—or yet for me," said Mathews.

"No? There is another?"

"Another, and a better."

"Then it will be a merry game; cutthroat, we called it on the Mississippi."

Mathews was silent. He saw that Montgomery might be of great use to them, and hesitated whether or not to trust him even slightly. Montgomery continued:

"These people," he said, "will follow a leader. Our play will be to seize the palace, cut the old priest's throat, and Zanaka's, and proclaim Cajelnar. There will be a fight but I can get you into the palace and there are plenty who will follow me, and the place is strong. When it is over—why, then we will settle this other little matter at our leisure."

What Mathews' answer would have been is beyond the reach of the historian, for at this moment there was a great commotion at the entrance of the grove and the sound of many persons rushing toward the hut where Julia Cajelnar was imprisoned. The drunkenness of the guard there had been discovered. Montgomery was alert in an instant.

"It's death to be found here," he said. "Run—you to the water—I will cut across the woods. Come ashore to-morrow night at 10, I'll watch for your boat. Now run! they'll kill you if they catch you." And he fled deeper into the grove, dodging easily among the trees and

once looking back to fling a contemptuous laugh at Mathews.

Mathews made his way safely to the shore where he waited in his boat ready to push off if necessary. But presently the excitement seemed to die away, and in the village all was still again. Neither Kenwood nor Lanier had returned. The boat in which they had come from the yacht lay on the sand where they had left it. Yet in the vicinity of the palace there was perfect quiet.

Presently Mathews moved out from the shore in his boat, but he did not turn the bow toward the yacht. His night's work was not yet accomplished. He headed down the lagoon, toward the place where the temple stood in the edge of the grove.

CHAPTER XV.

A LITTLE COQUETTE.

MEANWHILE Kenwood, accompanied by Lanier, was making a reconnoissance of the approaches of the palace. Kenwood had tried to induce the ex-consul to remain on the yacht, but however little Lanier had endorsed the enterprise of restoration in the beginning, he now saw that in it alone was there escape and safety for Cajelnar and Julia and he was determined, despite his age, to do his part. The two men crept slowly along the shore until they reached the extreme northern end of the island. Between them and the palace there was a dense growth of shrubbery, but the ground was regular and even and they had little difficulty in making their way over it in the darkness. The ex-consul believed that the vicinity of the palace would be quite deserted on this side and he was right. The palace was a long, low structure, constructed rudely enough of stone, and around it there was a high stone wall built for defense. To the

northward this wall presented a blank, unbroken side. There was not so much as a door or window. The thick shrubbery grew up close to the stone work. Guided and sheltered by this wall Kenwood and Lanier felt their way westward to the rear of the enclosure. Finally they came to the corner. The wall turned at a right angle, and continued southward. Further on to the west the central summit loomed dark and massive.

On this westward side the wall was built with equal care, but, as they crept along it, the two men saw that there were in it three entrance ways. One was large and arched, the entrance-space being filled by huge iron doors, presenting a formidable appearance. The other two entrances were smaller, and their doors were of wood, though protected and strengthened by bands of iron. To the south the wall was equally strong. The palace itself formed the defense of the eastward part.

For purposes of assault the place was practically impregnable, yet Kenwood's plan involved the capture of the palace. It was now late, and within the enclosure everything was quiet. Kenwood and the ex-consul had turned back in their search and were standing beside the wall to the westward, not far from one of the smaller entrance-ways.

"We must take it from the front," said Kenwood.

"We will have a try at it there," said the ex-consul dryly.

"You think success there impossible?"

"No, improbable."

"Hush," said the ex-consul suddenly, drawing nearer to the wall. There was a sound at the small doorway near them; some one was at work with the latch.

Presently the door opened and a man crossed the threshold, but lingered there. He was a native, but one of the more intelligent class. Like many, indeed most of those who were engaged in trade or commerce, he wore the dress of a European. The man lingered at the doorway, speaking to some one who stood just inside. Lanier, who understood the language, translated it later to Kenwood.

"To-morrow night?" the man said.

"No, no, I do not dare; I do not dare."

The man sighed deeply, with passion. It was a love scene which they were witnessing.

"The night after, then?" he said.

"Yes, perhaps, but I am afraid."

"You do not care;" his tone was full of reproach.

"Ah, do I not? See!" She slipped out

through the doorway, drawing the door nearly to behind her. She was a slender wisp of a girl, with a sweet dark face, and eyes which shone in the darkness. She flung an arm with charming abandon about the man's neck and drew his head down. For a moment she pressed her cheek against his, and then she kissed him on the lips.

He caught her in his arms and held her fast.

"The night after," he begged.

"Yes," she whispered.

"You will not forget?"

"Forget!" she looked up at him reproachfully.

"At 10 you will be at the door?"

"Yes, at 10."

"Can you be sure that no one sees me enter?"

"Yes. There will be no one near but—one, the one that marches up and down. But," she threw back her head laughing, "I can send him away."

"He loves you," the man said jealously.

"Perhaps he does," she said, laughing.

"He thinks you care for him."

She laughed still more merrily. "Perhaps he does," she said. "And you enter the more easily."

"You witch," he said, delighted, kissing her.

But now she made shift to send him away.

She said it quite tenderly, so that he held her nearer. But she drew away from him, still laughing.

"I will open the door for you at 10," she said.

"I will knock twice, a double knock," he said.

"And I will answer—to my love," she whispered, holding up her lips. He kissed her, and was gone.

"We will not make our try from the front after all," said Kenwood when Lanier translated to him.

"No more we will," said Lanier, "thanks to the little coquette. She is to get the guard out of the way, too. Did I tell you that?"

"Unless she changes her mind and loves the guard by then," said Kenwood.

"Her heart, you mean."

"I said her mind."

"Well, it is the same thing."

"With her it is," said Kenwood, laughing.

But there was yet serious work for the two men to do before they returned, and now they hastened to accomplish it. They crept back again along the north wall, and through the shrubbery to the shore, and made their way cautiously back to their boat. They embarked at once and pushing down along the shore of the lagoon,

passed the entrance of the stream. They would have ascended the stream in their boat, but they found the current so strong that they could not propel their craft swiftly and at the same time silently. They were thus forced to abandon this project, and going back to the open lagoon, they moored their boat on the sand southward of the mouth of the stream. Then they crept inland, entering the grove.

The two men moved cautiously along the bank of the stream until they reached the palm grove. Under the shelter of the trees they advanced until they were not far from the hut where Cajelnar was imprisoned. There they found a guard substantially the same as that which crouched about Julia Cajelnar's prison.

Kenwood examined the surroundings as carefully as he could without arousing the guard. Then, knowing the harm that might result from giving an alarm at this time, he motioned to Lanier and they silently retraced their footsteps.

When they reached the shore they embarked at once and soon were on board the yacht.

Mathews had reached it before them. He told them of Montgomery's offer of assistance.

"The man is a traitor twice so far," said Kenwood, "I would not trust him."

"You are right," said Lanier.

Mathews also agreed, but he thought longingly of the fight which Montgomery had promised afterwards. Julia Cajelnar was not for him; Mathews knew that full well, but it would have been sweet to get his hand upon Montgomery's throat for a moment before he lost her.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLAN.

THE plan which Kenwood had in mind was a hazardous one; for one reason because it involved the separation of their small forces. But they were so far outnumbered in any event that this did not present to his mind as serious an objection as under different circumstances it might have done. Whatever the natives could accomplish against them by the mere force of superior numbers, they would be able to do, were Kenwood's men united or divided.

The plan was to make three simultaneous movements, so sudden and so fierce that the natives, if all went well, might be surprised and thrown into a confusion from which they would not recover until the work of rescue and restoration had been practically accomplished. From the men recruited in the ship's company Kenwood proposed to form three groups or squads under the command of Lanier, Mathews, and himself. Lanier was to attack the palace

and take it, subduing the guard if he could, and making such disposition of the priest, Zanaka, Montgomery and their attendants as he found necessary.

At the same moment of Lanier's assault, Mathews and his men were to rush the guard at the hut where Julia Cajelnar was imprisoned. Kenwood, with his men, was to make a similar move on the hut of Cajelnar.

In assigning Mathews to the rescue of Julia, Kenwood performed an act of rare self-denial, which that young woman, it may be said in passing, was never able fully to understand, or if she understood, to applaud. Yet he followed the plain dictates of duty, and had he chosen the other part, it is not doubtful that in her secret heart she would have questioned, if she did no more.

If these rushes were successful Cajelnar and the girl were to be encircled by their rescuers and the two forces were to form a junction at the bridge, which they were to cross and make their way to the palace.

It was hoped that the storming of the palace by Lanier would attract most of the natives in that direction and that the field would be left practically clear before Kenwood and Mathews in the vicinity of the bridge. If Lanier had suc-

ceeded in taking the palace, and unless he had done so the whole plan fell to the ground, it was presumed that the effort to retake it on the part of the natives, if made at all, would be made from the front. It was planned, therefore, that after crossing the bridge Kenwood and Mathews with Julia and her father and their little band of supporters, should skirt around to the rear, where some of Lanier's men should be waiting at one of the smaller doors to aid and receive them.

Once within the palace Kenwood believed that the place could be held by his men. As soon as opportunity made possible, Kenwood planned to proclaim Cajelnar king, and he believed that as soon as this could be done a sufficient party of the natives would join the standard of the restored ruler to establish and uphold him.

One of the chief dangers which Kenwood feared was that, in the event of a sudden attack, the guards at the huts, acting under instructions, might dispatch their prisoners forthwith, not awaiting the formality of legal execution. The danger was partly guarded against by making the three assaults at the same moment. It was also to be met, he knew, only by the utmost alertness on the part of himself, Mathews and their companions.

Such was the desperate plan which Kenwood

had devised. That it was hazardous in the extreme, so hazardous that at first sight it seemed almost foolhardy, he saw quite clearly. But at the same time, it seemed to offer a chance of success. It was striking a blow, and it seemed, moreover, the only solution, if solution there were, of the difficult problem which they faced.

When he communicated it to his companions after they had returned from their night of reconnoissance, they gave to it prompt acceptance, whatever their views as to its ultimate success. The men from the yacht's company were summoned and chosen; daring spirits they were and nothing loath to join in a fight on shore.

So far fortune had favored them, for the problem of making an entrance into the palace practically had been settled by the discovery which the two men had made while standing near the doorway in the rear.

"She has not left me anything to do," said old Lanier, when Kenwood indicated to him what his part was to be; but Kenwood was not so confident.

"There'll be plenty to do, to look after the guard inside.

"And the mob outside," said Mathews.

"It is a good plan," said Lanier, after a pause, "a good plan, if it only—hangs together."

"I know," admitted Kenwood; "if it breaks down anywhere, the whole thing's a failure."

"In which case," said Mathews slowly, rising and walking toward the door of the cabin, "in which case, I think I'll take a hand myself."

Kenwood looked at his companion, puzzled.

"Your hand is a good one to play, surely," he said, smiling.

"None better," said Mathews; "and I'll play it, but if it fails—well, I might play from my sleeve." And he disappeared on deck, laughing.

CHAPTER XVII.

AT THE PALACE AND THE BRIDGE.

THE little coquette at the palace did not change her mind or her heart either—whichever she made of use in such affairs—for she opened the door in the western wall quite promptly at 10 o'clock on Thursday night in response to a double knock. But instead of her lover, grizzly old Lanier stood there at the entrance. She could have found her lover, if she gave him a thought in her fright, which is not likely, lying in the bushes a half-dozen yards from the wall, with a most unbecoming gag in his mouth, and his hands and feet securely tied.

“I am most sorry to disappoint you, madame,” said Lanier gallantly, as she caught sight of him. He saw that she was going to scream as soon as she could catch her breath, and quick as a wink he had his arms around her, quite lover like it was, too, and his hand over her pretty mouth. She struggled a bit, and then stood quite silently. Lanier slightly loosened his hand which held her mouth.

"Will you be quiet?" he said.

She nodded her head, panting, and he risked it. He removed his hand; she did not scream.

"You are a sensible woman, madame," he said, "but if you move you will be a dead woman."

He kept his eye on her as he turned to the door and pushed it partly open, beckoning to his men who waited outside. They entered and stood along the wall, well within the shadow. The girl had not stirred, though she was trembling.

"Quick," said Lanier to her, "where are the priest and Zanaka?"

"In the large room to the left of the hallway."

"Who else is there?"

"No one."

"Is there a guard?"

"Yes. About twenty soldiers."

"How many priests?"

"As many more."

The ex-consul shut his teeth with a snap.

"Come," he said to his men, "it is time we were making some noise."

And noise there was in a moment, plenty of it. The men needed no second bidding, and following the ex-consul they ran up the stairway that led to the rear of the palace and entered the building. Their entrance into the enclosure had

been so silent, and the assault on the palace itself was so sudden, that two burly guards who were stationed at the rear doorway actually stepped aside to let them pass. But Lanier and one of the sailors in the lead cut them down with a stroke of their sabers, lest they fall upon the little company from the rear. In the center there was a space where the hallway was wider, and here the guard, rallying from the confusion, made a stand. Lanier and his men fell upon them, fighting with terrible fierceness. The guards were armed with short swords and small firearms. The latter were quite useless at such close quarters and the short swords were no match for the sabers of the assaulting party. Gradually the guard fell back. As they did so they began to use their firearms, and with some effect; but the sailors sprang forward, cutting their way through the wide space to the narrower part of the hallway. Suddenly a figure darted out from the crowd of guards and attempted to rush past the assailants toward the rear. Lanier struck at him with his saber and he fell, the blood gushing from a deep cut over his temple. He rolled over upon his back and lay there, the top of his head bathed in the red tide, his upturned face drawn and ghastly. It was the Priest of Yharja. At the sight the guard and the

company of priests who had been seeking to defend their leader turned and fled down the hallway to the front of the palace. They flung open the doorway, and, with Lanier and his men pursuing them to the very threshold, rushed outside.

It was the work of but a moment to close and bar the doors through which they had escaped. The palace had been taken. One of the sailors had been killed outright by a bullet from one of the priest's defenders. Two or three were injured slightly. Lanier, who had fought where the fighting was fastest from the beginning, had not so much as a scratch.

And now, rushing to the windows and looking out, they saw that a terrible tumult was abroad in the town. At the public square a man was speaking to the crowd, which was gathering rapidly. They were evidently preparing to form for an assault on the captured palace.

But it was not the excited preparations at the square which attracted Lanier's chief notice. He was looking for Kenwood and Mathews. Already he had stationed two of his men at the rear entrance to admit them.

Suddenly he saw where they were, and he started back with a cry of dismay. Away down below the village, where the bridge crossed the

stream, a fierce battle was in progress. Even in the darkness Lanier could see the faces of some of the fighters by the flashes of firearms, and the sparks that flew when saber cut saber in the deadly combat. Lanier saw Kenwood and his men advance slowly, fighting every inch of the way, upon the bridge. But before they reached the center they were checked, and, slowly, they began to fall back. Once there was a mighty cheer from the natives, and the ex-consul thought that Kenwood was down or that Cajelnar had been recaptured, but a counter cheer from the sailors showed that the battle yet was neither won nor lost.

The first part of Kenwood's plan for the movements in the grove was carried out with as perfect success as that which crowned the promptness and energy of Lanier at the palace. The outcry at the palace when Lanier attacked had been enough, as Kenwood had hoped, to draw most of the defenders in that direction, away from the grove. Kenwood made a sudden assault, followed by his men, and before the guards could recover themselves, Cajelnar was released and the rush for the bridge began, Kenwood leading, saber in hand, and his men closing in about the rescued king. Mathews, meanwhile had acted with equal promptness and the forces easily joined at the bridge.

But here, for them, the trouble began. The guards, as soon as they recovered from the first confusion into which they had been thrown, raised a great outcry and threw themselves on the rear of the sailors who, with Kenwood and Mathews in the lead, were now crossing the bridge. Their outcry in the meantime drew the attention of some of the men who were forming in the village, and these, rushing to the bridge, threw themselves with violence on the advancing supporters of Cajelnar. The battle waged fiercely on the bridge, but it was an unequal struggle. Kenwood was not only assailed in front, but the guards beset him in the rear, and his forces were thus subject to a double peril.

In this emergency but one thing was possible; to give up the attempt to cross the bridge and retreat if possible to a safer field. In the rear Kenwood's men already had turned to beat off the assailing guard, and now back to back, the little force moved slowly off from the bridge. When the structure had been cleared Kenwood made a sudden turn to the right toward the interior of the island, thus clearing his rear and presenting a single front to the enemy. Slowly now he retreated within the shelter of the palm trees, where for a time he made a stand with his men. They used their firearms with

good effect, and presently there was a space before them comparatively free. It was still impossible to think of crossing the bridge, and, intent upon reaching the palace, Kenwood turned with his men as soon as he could do so, and made his way carefully upstream along the bank. He proceeded slowly, his men moving with their faces turned toward the pursuing enemy, keeping up a deadly fire. Gradually the number of their pursuers grew less and less, and presently the firing ceased altogether. Kenwood now looked for a crossing, and in this he was assisted by Cajelnar, who knew the ground. It was found at last, a narrow structure, but it served their purpose, and they crossed. They made their way rapidly now through the shrubbery, and finally reached the palace where they were admitted by Lanier's men.

Within the enclosure Kenwood looked around for the first time at his little band of heroic followers.

He gave an exclamation of horror.

Julia Cajelnar and Mathews were not there.

But now the natives were swarming about the front and rear of the palace and at any moment the doors at either end might be forced. It would be more than madness to try to make a sally in search of the missing girl. Torches were

now lighting with a lurid glare the vicinity of the public square and the palace, and Kenwood and Lanier could see Zanaka haranguing the crowd below. But the defenses of the place were strong and for a time the effect of the steady fire which the defenders kept up, through the openings in the doors in front and the wall in the rear, held the assailants in check. But this was only for a time. The crowd of natives grew gradually greater, and now they began to act with more complete organization under the lead of Zanaka. Battering rams were used with terrible effect on the huge doors in the rear of the palace and at every blow Kenwood and his companions expected to see them give way.

But it was not here that the most serious assault was to be made. A half-dozen natives, who had separated themselves from their companions in front and rear, had gone to the center of the wall on the south side, and there, by the use of knives and iron bars had succeeded at last in loosening a stone. Instantly a hundred eager hands were ready to help them and slowly the wall began to give way. Under direction of Kenwood a terrible fire was concentrated upon the point, but as one native fell another took his place, and soon the breach was wide enough to admit a man. As yet no one attempted to enter,

but the work of demolishing the wall proceeded rapidly. Wider and wider grew the breach and now a movement into the enclosure was made by the attacking natives; eager, merciless, and clamoring, they swarmed about the rear entrance of the palace. Practically the only defense at the rear was the wall of the enclosure, now useless. It was hopeless to try to make a stand there against the horde which was now pouring in. Kenwood and his men formed a circle about the king, who was wounded. They formed in the hallway just beyond the central widening, determined to sell their lives dearly, with no thought of yielding as long as power of resistance remained.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GODDESS OF YHARJA.

WHEN the guards in the grove recovered themselves from the confusion into which they had been thrown by the fierce, sudden rushes of Kenwood and Mathews, they threw themselves, as has been recorded, upon the rear of the rescuers. But the assault from the rear had not come wholly from the guard. When a junction of the two forces was made at the bridge, Mathews and his men, with Julia Cajelnar, fell in to the left of the column, and somewhat to the rear. They were chiefly of Mathews's party who turned their backs to their companions in order to beat off the guards.

Mathews turned with them, and as he did so he saw Montgomery, with half a dozen followers, also advancing. They were armed with sabers, but they held them as if rather for defense than attack, and in a moment Mathews saw that they were directing their assault toward the center of

the column, nearest to the place where Julia stood wedged in between her defenders.

The assault was so sudden and so well planned, and too, Mathews's followers were so hard pressed by the guard, that Montgomery and his men succeeded; and breaking the column, they seized the girl and bearing her between them, rushed away, before she could cry out, into the palm grove. Mathews, with a few of his men made off after them, forgetful of Cajelnar, of Kenwood, of everything except their devotion to Julia.

Montgomery and his men rushed forward through the grove; but, impeded by their burden, they were no match for their pursuers, and coming to a low stone barrier which offered them a slight protection, they made a stand. The forces were about equal.

Suddenly Montgomery shouted to Mathews across the barricade.

"I'll fight you alone," he cried mockingly.

The blood leaped to Mathews's brain.

"Done," he answered, motioning to his men to stand back.

In an instant Montgomery climbed coolly over the barricade, saber in hand. Mathews advanced to meet him. As they came within reach of each other, however, Montgomery lowered his blade.

"We can't fight in the dark!" he said petulantly.

"I can kill you as well in the dark as in the light," said Mathews, setting his teeth. Then he added: "For I am going to kill you."

Montgomery shrugged his shoulders.

"But I don't choose to be murdered. Wait," he said.

He turned to one of his men, and in an instant the native dashed away.

Mathews waited with impatience.

"If you had waited an hour," said Montgomery, "you would not have found her there when you rushed the guard. She was going away with me."

Mathews made no reply.

"At least, I was going to take her away," added Montgomery with a laugh.

Now the native came running back, bearing two huge torches in his hand. They lighted up the grove with a strange illumination. Montgomery took one of the torches from the native and handed it to Mathews.

"Give that to your man," he said. "This fellow will light for me."

And now the strange duel began, the two attendants holding the torches high, so that the shadows fell low, not interfering with the fighting.

From the beginning the men fought furiously,

their sabers clashing again and again in the uncertain light. Saber fighting at best is no simple game, and, both men being unfamiliar with their weapons though fairly trained in ordinary sword play, the contest was rather one of quickness and endurance than of skill. Round and round the two men circled, the advantage now with one, now with another. Once Montgomery touched his companion on the shoulder and the red blood answered freely. Julia, who was looking on with awestruck eyes, gave a gasp of horror, but Mathews fought on, nothing daunted. Both men were panting now, and for a space they moved around less swiftly and with greater caution. Then the fight grew furious again and suddenly Montgomery dropped his saber and sank to his knees, clutching at his throat, from which the blood spurted and flowed. He gasped, struggled a moment, and then sank in a heap upon the ground. With a terrible swing, though it was a chance blow, Mathews had almost severed his antagonist's head from his body. Montgomery was quite dead when Mathews rolled him over upon his face.

As they saw their leader fall the natives turned and fled in the direction of the town. Mathews sprang to Julia's side.

"Quick," he said, "to the palace."

But when they reached the open they saw that it would be madness to seek to make their way to the royal residence. They heard the thundering of the battering ram, and, in the glare of the torches which lighted the assault, they saw the men at work where the wall was broken.

They had not yet crossed the stream and Mathews drew his little company back into the shelter of the grove. Suddenly he turned to Julia.

"Can you do a daring thing?" he demanded.

"I can do anything; shall we make a rush for it? Do you mean that?"

"No, no; it would be certain death. But there is yet a chance. Come, follow me."

With Julia beside him and the men following he dashed forward toward the lagoon. When they reached the open they saw, a hundred yards to the southward, a boat with a single occupant, riding just clear of the beach. Mathews ran down the sand until he stood opposite it.

He called to the man in the boat.

"Down there," he cried pointing toward the shore near the temple. "There is not a minute to lose."

The man headed his boat toward the spot indicated, and pulled lustily. Mathews and his companions kept up with him on the beach.

Presently the spot opposite the temple was reached and the boat was drawn up on the shore. In the stern a half-dozen boxes were piled.

The temple was quite deserted, the men who guarded it having joined in the attack upon the captured palace. The structure was low and chiefly of stone. In front there were pillars, and a raised platform or balcony. On each side of this platform stone curbs, about two feet high, cut off a narrow space before the wall of the structure.

Behind these curbs Mathews, who had examined the building on Tuesday night after his adventure with Montgomery near the hut where Julia was imprisoned, now arranged, with the greatest care, the contents of the boxes. Julia watched him in astonishment.

"Are you afraid?" he asked.

"Afraid, no!"

"You are to be the goddess—of Yharja," he said.

Her eyes grew big with wonder, but she did not tremble and her voice was quite steady.

"Tell me plainly what I am to do," she said.

"I do not understand it all."

He had finished arranging the contents of the boxes, and now he rose and addressed her gravely.

"Listen," he said, "for what we do we must

do quickly, for I do not think they can hold out much longer up there. Here, put this robe about you. There, that is well. You are not trembling and you will not fail. I am going to light up the temple now, and the grove. When I give you the word walk slowly out on the platform there. See, get further into the shadow until I call to you. You know the story of the goddess. Speak to them, and I think they will obey you. If they recognize you, jump and we will make a rush for the boat. If they do not recognize you, I think we can win the day yet."

The girl grasped his meaning quickly.

"I am ready," she said.

Mathews stepped to his position behind the curb.

The natives came pouring into the palace from the rear, and in overwhelming numbers would have thrown themselves murderously upon the little band of defenders of the king, but suddenly a singular, awful appearance palsied the arm of assailant and defender alike, and turned the tide of fortune which had set so strongly against the supporters of Cajelnar.

The vicinity of the temple in the palm grove, near the shore, was suddenly lighted up with a fierce, blinding glare. The natives turned in that direction and looked. The fierce light con-

tinued, and now the colors changed rapidly, and streams of fire seemed to cast themselves from a burning center, flowing out into space.

And now an awed silence of trembling expectation fell over the people. As they looked toward the temple they saw a figure move out upon the stone platform in front of the temple. It was the figure of a woman, clothed in long, flowing robes of white.

Suddenly a cry arose.

"Yharja! Yharja!" they cried.

In a moment the word was taken up by the multitude.

"Yharja! Yharja!" they cried and they began to move toward the temple. In a short space the palace was deserted, save by the little body of its defenders, and the multitude bowed in the dust before the temple, where the goddess of Yharja stood calmly in the blinding glare, awaiting their silence, to speak to them.

The people bowed their heads in humbleness and humiliation and to them now Yharja spoke. Her voice was clear and strong and true, and in it was a ring of dignity and authority well befitting her mysterious and sacred character. At first her words were those of denunciation, of bitterness, of condemnation and reproach, and they bowed their heads deeper in the sand and moaned pitifully. Then she spoke more quietly,

pointing out to them the evil that had come to them from their impiety and folly. She spoke of reparation and of penances, and with cries and gestures they indicated that they would do her will. She bade them restore the ancient usages and the king, against whom they had fought this night, and they promised, springing to their feet in haste to run to do him homage. But she made them bow down again lest they be blinded, and in a moment the terrible light blazed afresh until the whole island was illuminated by its unearthly glare. There was a blinding flash, and she was gone.

And now, throwing down their arms, the people hastened to the palace to do homage to Peter Cajelnar, the king. Kenwood and Lanier saw them coming and feared another assault, but some of the more fleet-footed ran on ahead and, gesturing the peacefulness of their mission, acquainted the defenders of the palace with the strange events which had taken place.

Presently Kenwood and Lanier saw that it was true, and they flung open the wide doorway at the entrance, and with Cajelnar between them, and a little group of wearied, bleeding comrades, stood out upon the balcony, before the gathering multitude, and there they proclaimed Cajelnar king, amid the joyous acclamations of the people.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DEATH OF THE KING.

THUS was the King of Yajoha restored to his throne and to his people. But Fate, which had marked this little island to be the scene of thronging events, had yet in store. Now Fate is a curious Lady, or three Ladies if you please, and as she orders, or as they order, so let it be, though you or I perhaps might order differently.

When Cajelnar had received the homage of the people upon the balcony, his companions drew him quickly back inside the palace, and they shut the doors, admitting no one, for they saw that he was breathing heavily, and that the blood was flowing again from the saber cut in his side. As they closed the door he fainted and they bore him away and placed him upon a couch, where he lay quietly. The faintness passed quickly, but he was very weak. The wound was more serious than they had supposed.

Kenwood and Lanier, both of whom had come

uninjured from the fight, stood near his couch, and to each of them he reached out a weary hand.

"It was a good blow you struck," he said, "and you struck it like men. Lanier, old friend, I shall die a king."

"Not for many a day, please God," said Lanier; but he shook his head to Kenwood when Cajel-nar was not looking.

The king turned his face wearily away, and for a time there was silence, then he spoke again.

"Julia, where is she?" he asked.

"Good God!" said Lanier springing to his feet.

But at that moment she entered with Mathews. She threw herself beside her father's couch.

"Father!" she cried, throwing her arms about him.

He stroked her dark hair gently.

"You are injured!" she cried suddenly, for the first time noting the wound and the pallor of his face.

"I shall die a king, among my people," he said gently, but she looked up wildly at Lanier and the others.

"He will not die, he must not die, not now!" she said. But he was sinking rapidly and the physician who had been in attendance since

Cajelnar reached the palace shook his head as he made another examination.

Suddenly Cajelnar raised himself slightly on his couch and took his daughter's hand, looking at her earnestly.

"I shall not rule again in Yajoha," he said, so earnestly that none interrupted to seek to cheer him, "for I am dying, the king is dying. Do you, Julia, reign in his stead. The people of this island are your people as well as mine, you shall be their queen, to lead them, to succor them, to be their stay, their guide. Rule justly, as your father would have ruled; be faithful as he would have been. Julia, will you do it?"

She was kneeling, but she drew her body erect, and looked at her father with clear unfaltering eyes.

"I will be their queen, and they shall be my people, and I will be faithful," she said.

He drew her dark head down and kissed her gently; then he turned his head away, for he was very weary and fell asleep. And thus he continued until he ceased to breathe, his daughter kneeling before him, Kenwood near her, and Lanier and Mathews standing a little further away toward the foot of the couch.

Thus died Peter Cajelnar, King of Yajoha. After he was dead and they had covered his face,

and straightened his limbs lovingly, they left him and went into an adjoining room. Lanier did not sit down but paced back and forward excitedly. Suddenly he stopped in front of Julia:

"You do not think of—remaining here?" he said.

She smiled up at him, sweetly and sadly.

"I shall remain," she said simply.

"It is madness," said the ex-consul vehemently.

"They are my people," she answered.

But he would not listen to her. His grief and resentment knew no bounds. It was preposterous, ridiculous, impossible, he said. He denied that they were her people. They were heathens, savages, murderers. He begged, he commanded, he almost went on his knees to her, but she listened, not chiding him for his wild words, but never wavering from her purpose.

"I shall stay," she said, when he finally reached an end, "and if they are not already my people, I shall make them so. Did not my father teach me their language and their customs when I was a little child, telling me that they too were his children, and that some day we should return to them? All this you know. They are not strange to me, and God wills that I should lead and guide them. Therefore, I shall stay."

Kenwood and Mathews, during this conversation had remained silent. Mathews now spoke.

"I think with Lanier," he said. "Already there has been sacrifice enough."

The girl held out her hand to him smiling.

"Yet must I stay," she said gently.

"I know, I know," he answered.

And now she turned to Kenwood who still was silent.

"And what say you?" she asked softly. They knew that she loved him; that his word would have weight with her as that of no other, and they waited eagerly for his answer. But she knew what he would answer.

"I think that you must remain," he said.

And now Lanier and Mathews left these two together alone; Lanier to look again upon the face of the dead king; Mathews to pace up and down in the hallway, striving to hide a sorrow which he would not show.

As the door closed Kenwood was on his knees before her, and her arms were around his neck.

"My love, my love," she whispered, kissing his hair.

"God wills that you must stay, but that I—must go," he said.

"Yes, God wills it," she answered.

There was a long silence, but presently they

began to talk of the past, since the future lay dark before them. They spoke of the morning when he found her first, upon the wreck; of their merry journey across the sands with the boat; of the long vigil near the hut, where wordlessly their hearts had spoken and claimed an eternal kinship; of the morning on the summit in the park when she told him of her father's longing for his home; of the meeting in the cathedral where first their love spoke boldly. Sweet reminiscences they were, but they spoke them sadly, for the end of it all was to be a parting.

CHAPTER XX.

AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT.

AND now the days sped swiftly, as days of fond companionship speed, when beyond lie separation and dreary waiting. It was quite four weeks since the restoration, and a day for departure had been set, and now it was near, so near that Kenwood felt his heart sinking with the thought of parting. Kenwood and Mathews were going; Lanier was to remain.

On the evening before the day fixed for the departure Kenwood and Lanier were walking on the sand near the shore of the lagoon. For a long time they walked in silence, each busy with his own thoughts. Grave thoughts they were, and sorrowful. But they would not speak sorrowfully; therefore they walked up and down, each knowing that the other's sympathy was no less deep because wordless.

Presently Kenwood began to speak of a plan which they had formulated for the people of Yajoha. It was the second part of the task

which he had accepted from the last message of his father. The manner of it related to the building up of the commerce of the island, and Kenwood now went over the details as they had thought them out, Lanier adding a suggestion here and there, but for the most part listening or seeming to listen.

"You are coming back now and then, to see how it all goes?" said Lanier, rather wistfully as Kenwood paused.

"I hardly know," said Kenwood. He was thinking of Julia Cajelnar. Presently he added: "If I can be a help to—her, I will come."

"Then you will come," said Lanier.

"Ah, I wish I were sure. But if it were to make it hard for her——"

"Stuff," said the ex-consul.

But Kenwood shook his head, making no reply. Presently Lanier made a gesture of impatience.

"It cannot last; it must not last," he said.

"What cannot last?"

"This whim, this notion of hers to stay here, with these people."

"I think it will last," said Kenwood gravely.

But the old ex-consul would see nothing but folly in it.

"And you intend to leave it so; to give her up?" he demanded.

Kenwood was silent for a space.

"I do not know," he said. "Perhaps, some time, it may be different, and she may be mine again. But I dare not put it into words; dare not think definitely of it even. Now there is only duty, her duty and mine."

The ex-consul gave an expression of disgust, but Kenwood only smiled. He knew how gentle, how keenly sympathetic was the sturdy heart beneath this rough exterior.

And now they fell to talking about the immediate future of the island. Since Julia had been proclaimed, the utmost harmony had seemed to exist among the natives, who rendered her the strongest support and most respectful homage. The council of natives which she had chosen included the most intelligent leaders among her people. The priestly class had been, of necessity, recognized, but the greatest care had been taken in choosing its representatives.

"If only we were sure about Zanaka," said Kenwood.

"I am sure enough about him," said Lanier grimly.

"You mean that you think he is up to mischief?"

"Exactly."

"He may be dead," said Kenwood.

"Perhaps, but I think his body would have been found."

"But where could he be; what could he be doing?"

"The most that I can hope," said Lanier, "is that he has left the island for good and all. That may be possible, but I confess it does not seem likely enough to give me a great deal of comfort. If he wants to, he can make trouble."

"He is strong with the people," admitted Kenwood.

"That's not the worst of it," said Lanier. He drew nearer his companion and spoke in a low tone.

"He knows about Yharja," he said.

"Not that Julia——"

"Just that. He recognized her. He is not superstitious."

"How do you know?"

"Julia knows. She noticed while she was speaking to them before the temple. He has not been seen since."

Here was a serious matter. Kenwood's face grew troubled. Zanaka's absence had been noticed immediately after the restoration and the death of Cajelnar, but at first they had supposed that he was sulking, and had been disposed to let him alone until his own interests

brought him to seek to accommodate himself to the new *régime*. His continued absence had come to be a matter of concern, and finally Julia had confided to Lanier her belief that Zanaka had recognized her on the night when for a brief space she played to such good purpose the rôle of Goddess of Yharja. This belief had not been, up to this time, communicated to Kenwood, Julia, in her thoughtfulness, fearing that it would cause him needless anxiety.

Kenwood now turned to Lanier.

"We must find that man," he said with determination.

"Perhaps not so easy a matter," said the ex-consul.

But Kenwood was planning rapidly.

"You say you hope he has left the islands," he said; "how could he have left; by what means?"

"The Occident remained at Llamaja. He could have reached there easily enough in a small boat."

The two men now continued their walk, silence again falling upon them. The moon had risen and was shining brightly, so that they could see far out over the lagoon, across the coral reef, to the place where their yacht lay peacefully at anchor.

Suddenly Lanier gripped Kenwood's arm, and stopped him. Kenwood looked at his companion in surprise, and then followed the direction of Lanier's gaze out across the reef. He gave an ejaculation of surprise.

"What is she? She is not the Occident," he cried.

"No, not the Occident," answered Lanier. In the uncertain moonlight he was looking with wide, eager eyes.

"She is coming to anchor," said Kenwood. "See, Lanier, can you see?"

"Yes, yes. Wait! Kenwood, she is a warship!"

"A warship!"

"Yes. What other craft afloat carries a shape like that? She is a warship; nothing less."

The two men watched the strange vessel excitedly. The steamer showed no lights, but in the stillness of the night they could hear movements aboard her and orders given. She came to anchor within a half-mile of the yacht.

Suddenly Kenwood turned and, calling to Lanier to come on, made his way rapidly along the beach.

"We will go out to the Valiant. From there we can tell something of what she is," he cried.

Lanier followed him, and soon they were on

board the yacht. Mathews, who had not been ashore, greeted them excitedly. He had been watching the vessel as she came to anchor. She was indeed a warship, of the cruiser type, and huge guns frowned below her deck.

As soon as she had anchored, lights began to show aboard her, and presently there was the sound of the lowering of a boat. Then there came the regular swing of the oars in the oarlocks, growing more and more distinct. The boat was nearing the yacht. Presently it was within hailing distance, and in the moonlight they could see an officer in uniform, standing in the bow. He hailed them now:

"What craft are you?" he demanded.

"The yacht Valiant, at present in the service of Julia, Queen of Yajoha," answered Kenwood.

The officer waited a moment, speaking to a companion in the boat. In a moment he shouted again:

"Admiral Von Soult presents his compliments," he said, "and requests that your commander, with two officers, do him the honor to confer with him immediately on board the cruiser." The language was courteous, but there was a ring of authority in the tone.

"Von Soult!" cried Lanier, gripping Kenwood's arm.

"Yes, what does it mean?" asked Kenwood.

"God knows," answered Lanier.

"Could he have heard of the battle?"

"Perhaps. Answer the fellow; he is waiting."

Presently, in their own boat, Kenwood, Lanier, and Mathews with a crew made spick and span for the occasion, proceeded to the warship. They were taken on board at once and welcomed with grave dignity by an officer who conducted them below to the admiral. The latter came straight to the point.

"There has been another revolution here," he said bluntly, "and a fight. The ruler of the island, head of the church and of the government, has been killed in his residence, and the government overturned. I take it that you—gentlemen—do not belong to the island, but that you had a hand in the revolution."

His manner was direct, vigorous, even harsh. He awaited no reply, and continued:

"I do not know to what penalty you may have made yourselves liable; that can be examined later. I have sent for you for another purpose."

The three men bowed; suddenly the admiral's manner changed and he looked at them with a more genial expression on his face.

"Pray be seated," he said. "I will be frank with you."

The four men now seated themselves beside a table in the center of the cabin, and the admiral addressed them, leaning toward them over the polished surface upon which occasionally by way of emphasis he brought his hand down with a resounding thump.

"This is the second serious disturbance—besides innumerable small ones—on these islands within little more than twenty years," he said earnestly. "The first one was disastrous, and the trade with the island which my government had fostered with the greatest care, was almost ruined. Since that time every effort has been put forth to improve it, but, though the resources of the group are little less than magnificent, the results have not been encouraging.

"Now comes another revolution, murder is done, the church is overthrown, the palace seized, and a new ruler proclaimed, a woman at that!"

"The old king was restored," said Kenwood, "and the man who was killed was a usurper. The king died later from his wounds, and his daughter naturally succeeded him."

"Tut!" cried the admiral, bringing his fist down upon the table with a bang, "I do not want to hear the details of your quarrels. I have heard all I want to hear. I know that

there has been bloodshed, and that trade will suffer if this thing is allowed to go on."

"There will be no more disturbance," said Kenwood, "and the new government is most favorable to the increase of trade. The people are satisfied now."

"It is natural that you should say so," said the admiral, "since you succeeded in setting up your government, but others think differently. Wait." He pressed a button, and an aide answered, saluting.

"Bring that heathen here," he said. The aide departed and presently returned with—Zanaka.

Zanaka stood before them motionless, his swarthy face bearing an expression of triumph, though he did not smile or speak.

The three men started when they saw him, and the admiral noted it with a grin of satisfaction.

"We get rather a different story from this—gentleman, whom I see you recognize," he said. He motioned to the aide.

"That will do for the present," he added to Zanaka, with a bow. There was humor in the bow, though the admiral appeared perfectly grave and serious.

"But, as I tell you," continued the admiral

after Zanaka had disappeared, "I do not wish, my government does not wish, to inquire into your quarrels. It is enough for my government that trade is retarded, and murder done. These things, gentlemen, I must tell you, in the name of my government, cannot continue! They cannot continue!"

"They will not continue," said Kenwood earnestly, "under the present *régime*——"

"They will not continue," said the admiral, now fixing his gaze directly upon his visitors and speaking with great impressiveness, "they will not continue, sir, for a better reason than the one you give. Gentlemen, my government is about to annex these islands!"

If the admiral had expected to see the marks of consternation, of protest, of rebellion, of anger, on the faces of his visitors—and doubtless the old sea dog was prepared for any of them—he was treated to a surprise.

Old Lanier sprang from his chair, and grasped the admiral's hand with an exclamation of joy.

"Thank God! thank God!" he cried, wringing the admiral's hand.

Mathews was hardly less exultant, though he expressed it differently.

"The police are welcome in this case, though they come in after the fight," he said, smiling joyously.

Kenwood alone was silent.

"I am glad you are—satisfied," said the admiral, recovering from any surprise which he may have felt. "You understand that this—queen—of yours will have to come down; that is, she will be obliged to give way to a representative of my government."

"That's it, thank God!" said Lanier.

The admiral looked puzzled, and now he turned to Kenwood.

"Well, sir," he said brusquely, "shall we expect acquiescence also from you?"

Kenwood hesitated for a moment, then a look of relief came over his face. The lines of anxiety which had been deepening there for many months almost faded out for the moment. He held out his hand to the admiral.

"You act in the interest of trade and commerce," he said.

"And humanity," said the admiral.

"Commerce is civilization," said Kenwood.

"It is," said the admiral.

"Then you can count upon my acquiescence, sir, and my assistance, if I can render any," said Kenwood.

"You talk like sensible men," said the admiral, "the other fellow didn't. He wanted me to cut your throats, together with the queen's.

Between you and me, this annexation may stagger him a bit. But we will look after him."

The admiral now looked about him with keen satisfaction.

"If it were proper," he said, "I would like to know how you three men got mixed up in this thing. But it is not proper. I am not permitted to inquire into this quarrel. But one thing I can do, and am going to do; two things in fact. To-morrow I am going to take possession of these islands, in the name of my government; now, if you will be seated, I am going to open a few small bottles."

CHAPTER XXI.

UNTIL THE END OF ALL.

THUS was the reign of the good Queen Julia of Yajoha shortened into a brief space. It is the age of commerce, as well as the age of civilization, and in this age, both commerce and civilization have come to stand for annexations and protectorates and spheres of influence, so that it behooves such sovereigns as this gentle lady to stand aside before the march of progress.

Whether she subscribed to this doctrine or not, Julia stood aside. Indeed Admiral Von Soult gave her little time to make choice. He came ashore in the morning, accompanied by a small guard and a single officer, and, with little heed to formality, proceeded to the palace, where he made known his mission. Half an hour later the flag of his government was flying from the topmost pinnacle, and the officer was installed as governor. The governor proceeded to issue a proclamation, with which Admiral Von Soult had provided him, by which the natives—so far as

they could understand—became acquainted with the beneficent purposes of the new *régime* and the new career of the island and its neighbors was fairly begun.

Admiral Von Sault had been instructed to purchase the allegiance of the queen, but after a brief interview with her he came away without having put his instructions into words. He had, indeed, hinted at a pension, but the result had not been of a nature to encourage him to go further.

“If the rest of them had been like her,” he said later, “we wouldn’t have had this chance, not so good a chance, to get the islands.”

“But,” he added after a moment of thought, “we would have had them.”

After it was all over Julia and Kenwood stood upon the balcony, looking out across the lagoon. A sudden shyness had taken possession of the girl and for a time both were silent.

“Dearest,” he whispered presently.

She gave him a quick glance from her glorious eyes.

“Am I that still?” she asked, smiling.

“Did you think you were not?”

“I have been deposed,” she said ruefully.

“From the throne of Yajoha, yes; yet still you reign.”

“How, still?”

“In my heart; how well you know.”

“It is a kingdom,” she whispered.

And now this gentle lady, so strong of will and mind and body, was guilty of a whim. She would return with Lanier—she made no protest over leaving the island where her work was done, but she would return by way of Cape Horn, and by no other way. Kenwood had planned to take them in the Valiant to San Francisco, sending the vessel later upon the long voyage to the north Atlantic, but the girl would have none of it. Nor did he long oppose her, nor did Lanier nor Mathews.

Fair weather attended them upon their homeward journey and even the wild region of the cape waved them a gentle welcome and farewell. A peaceful voyage and a joyous one, save for the sadness which came over them when they thought of Peter Cajelnar. Yet he had died a king, among his people, in the home that he loved and given his life for, and they knew that where they left him his rest was sweet.

One day they anchored off the harbor of Montevideo, and Julia and Kenwood went ashore, to revisit the cathedral. She entered the pew where he had found her listening to the anthem months before. The place seemed to be quite deserted now; the loft was silent.

He came and stood beside her as he had done on the day when he told her of his love.

"How long it seems ago," she said.

"And yet it is not long. It seems but yesterday, if you cut the suffering and the sorrow out."

"Ah, the suffering and the sorrow. I could not have borne them if it had not been——"

"If it had not been——?"

"That I came into my kingdom, here."

"My queen," he murmured. Then he took her hand and leaning toward her, said:

"I told you then that I would be near you while you were in danger; the danger is passed, yet I would be near; I would be near you always, my love, my queen."

She raised her dark eyes to his and answered him with her gaze, all love and joy, fixed upon him, thus:

"Until the end of all," she said.

THE END.

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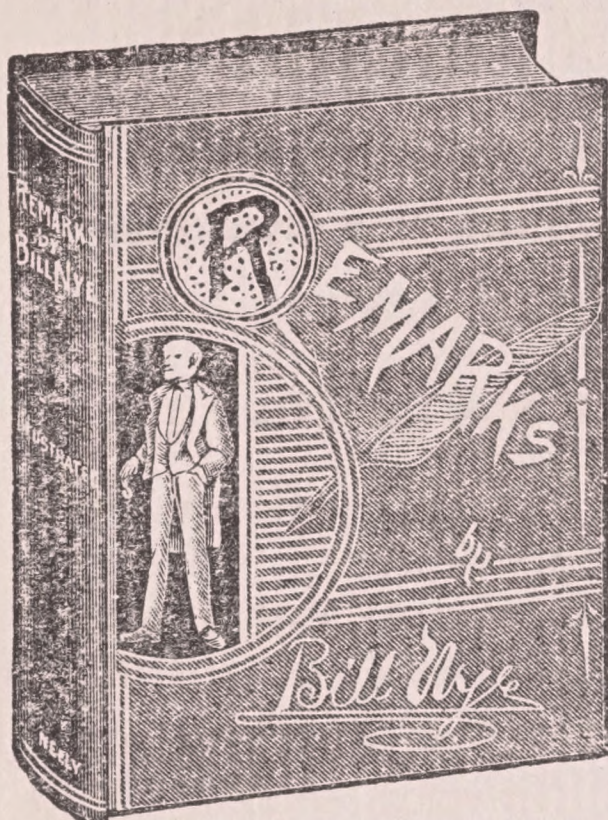
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